Hugh Cecil Earl of Lonsdale.

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Engraved by E. Hacker.

from a Painting by the Author

Going like Workmen.

270

PRACTICAL

HORSEMANSHIP.

BY HARRY HIEOVER,

AUTHOR OF "THE POCKET AND THE STUD;" AND
"THE STUD FOR PRACTICAL PURPOSES AND
PRACTICAL MEN."

SECOND EDITION.

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PREFACE.

THE first inquiry on seeing a book advertised as "shortly will be published," "in the press," or, "just published," usually is, Who is the author? and happy he who dares hope that his name may be any recommendation to the forthcoming work.

But supposing even this to be the case, the author must not hold such a consummation of his wishes to be a proof that he is of more than *médiocre* general talent; for the favourable reception his works may meet with, may very probably arise more from his knowledge of his subject than from any superior mental qualities; and the most flattering compliment he is in such case warranted in taking to himself is, that he has sense enough to write on such matters only as he

is conversant with. Many authors are not content to thus limit the effusions of their pen, and when they do not, the public generally gives them a silent, but forcible lesson, by leaving such works unpurchased and unread; and if that awful tribunal, the press, finds that, so far from being authorised in exhibiting its usual liberality and indulgence, justice and impartiality demand a castigation at its hands, the author must possess more courage, or vanity, than one in a thousand, if he can again raise his diminished head.

In bringing forward any work before the public, it should be no light consideration with an author what title he selects; for if the title is judiciously chosen, it frequently prevents the reader being disappointed in not finding the work embrace matter of a different order from any the author may contemplate. For instance, had I designated this volume "A Manual of Horsemanship," — "A Treatise on Horsemanship," — or, worse than all, "The Complete Horseman," — he would naturally expect to find in it all the minutiæ of manége, principle and practice; and on such style of riding, more or less, have nearly all works on Horsemanship treated. That such works are of a superior order

to that now in the reader's hands, I have not the slightest objection to admit; whether to the ordinary rider they may be more useful, is quite another matter. It is not to the generality of men that all the perplexing intricacies of any pursuit are necessary; to the majority they would be useless; and I do not hesitate to say, that two thirds of what is discussed in elaborate works on Horsemanship would only perplex the ordinary pupil, without doing him any good. They are highly creditable to the professors; and if my reader contemplates becoming one of these, let him read them, and throw this aside, for its title only holds out as its object the hope of assisting him in becoming a practical horseman as a private individual.

The design of the present book did not originate with myself, but was suggested to me by others, who flatter me by thinking that I could write what might be acceptable and useful to many, on the subject of general practical horsemanship. Of course, wherever, and whenever, horsemanship is displayed, be it of what sort it may, it is practical; but I mean by the term to indicate such horsemanship as is in every-day use.

I do not mean to insinuate that I can, or ever did, "witch the world with noble horsemanship;" but having as child, boy, and man, been tumbled about in all directions, by all sorts of horses, I certainly became one not easily dislodged by the animal I bestrode; and from having practically learned the usual modes by which horses effected such purpose, I also learned how to counteract their kind intentions.

It will be judged from what I have said, that I do not contemplat eany treatise on those peculiarities or refinements in horsemanship once so much in vogue in school-practice. The high-dressed *manége* horse exists no longer, at least in this country. I have, when quite a boy, ridden such; but I should be incompetent to give any available information on this style of riding, and if I could, it would now be useless. No doubt, those who could have done so were fine horsemen, but they were so for the school only. If I, therefore, take the far humbler walk in instruction, and teach the novice how to ride in safety from Kilburn to Cumberland Gate, and to prevent his horse attempting becoming inside passenger in an omnibus, such information will really be of more use than the most elaborate work on a style of

horsemanship that the reader will, most probably, never have occasion or opportunity to practise, or perhaps even see.

Some time ago I was told by a valued friend that he always hired a horse for two months in the summer, for the benefit of air and exercise. "But," said he, "the last I hired, if he came near a wall would always take me up to it: and for the life of me I could never get him away from it, till I got some one to lead him off for me. Now," continued he, "if you would write a book on common ordinary riding, I dare say you would tell me how I could have managed this horse; and depend on it, there are thousands who ride as I do for health, who know no more of riding than myself, and to them your book would be invaluable."

I promised to make the attempt; the result is before the reader; and though there are thousands who know quite enough to preclude any hope on my part that the book will be useful to them, and thousands to whom it might in some way perhaps be useful but who will not allow or consider that it could be so, yet if it is found to be useful to the thousands whom my friend de-

scribes as being aware of knowing no more than himself, I shall be quite satisfied.

The first thousand I have mentioned may, and probably will, call it the hornbook of horsemanship, — be it so. It was not written for such persons, but if it teaches A B C to those who did not know as much before, it will quite answer my intention, and I sincerely hope it may their purpose.

H. H.

EXPLANATION OF THE PLATES.

I AM not, perhaps, paying a very high compliment to my pencil in thinking an explanation of its attempts necessary. This is, however, a matter of no consequence to any one. But at all events, I beg my readers to believe that I mean no ill compliment to them; and this is a matter of very serious consequence to me.

The difference between the riders and horses in the two plates will be apparent at a glance, and a consummate judge of horsemen and horses would require no explanation of this: but, as the class of readers to whom alone I dare flatter myself this book will be found useful do not profess to be either, I think it desirable to describe to them the particular points of distinction between "going like workmen," and "going like muffs."

If we look at the horse going like a workman, we see him one of a sort they will find described as likely

to be able to do any thing a gentleman would require of a horse in a *gentlemanly* way. The man would not be very much to be pitied who had half-a-dozen such in his stable as hunters in ordinary countries. He shows he can go lightly, safely, and pleasantly as a hack; his countenance, and collected, easy style of going evince the docility, and, at the same time, the spirit, necessary for a lady's horse; and I would back a pair of horses of such breeding, quietly handled, not to kick if put into a phaeton. His condition shows he is not indolent enough to be fat, or restless and fidgetty enough to be thin; and is just such as a month's training would make him fit to run a hurdle race, or steeple-chase; and he looks like one not to be quite out of the betting if he started for either. Though not fleshy, he shows considerable muscular development: the great strength and size of his haunches and quarters evince great propelling power; and his strength of loins shows that, if put at a fence in a meaning-to-go way, the rider would only have to "sit tight."

It will be seen he has his fore-legs well and safely before him, so that he can handle his feet like a pair of hands, just as he likes; and his hind quarters are so collected that he would step handsomely and easily in any pace. He is going at a nice sweeping canter, but could evidently spring into three-quarters speed in three or four strokes. He is going on the snaffle-rein, with his head just in a position that gives the bit a true and fair bearing in his mouth. I have had several of my own in my mind's eye while I was

sketching him; and, as he is one of the sort I have particularly recommended to my readers, it is some proof of my sincerity, whatever it may be of my judgment, when I present him as one of a sort which I used myself.

The rider is just of a nice hunting weight, about eleven stone with his saddle; strong enough to hold any horse, yet light enough for anything worthy of being called a hunter to carry; and actively-made enough, if he is good enough, to be, in pugilistic phrase, a troublesome customer to the ordinary run of men on occasion. His dress shows him a riding man, but still it is one that would not preclude his entering a drawing-room for a morning call. His legs are just where they ought to be in the pace he is going. The cut of his trousers looks more like riding where he is, than walking in Regent Street. His bridle hand is where he has perfect command of his horse's mouth, though in an easy position to himself; his other is where he could lay hold of his rein, use his whip, or wave his hand to a friend with equal facility; in fact, he looks like one who gave himself little trouble how he got up, but would give a horse a great deal to get him down. But he looks one of the sort to all of whom I sincerely wish the possession of such a property as he is cantering over; like one to be ever ready to put his hand in his pocket for the shivering applicant, and to effectually relieve him in private, though he might not establish a school, and stipulate for a kind of gaol dress, to brand its objects with the stigma of poverty and dependence, in order to chronicle his acts of charity to the public.

In the next plate we see quite another sort of animal. Her breed, like that of her rider, is quite beyond my powers of conception to suggest; and, provided both are the last of that breed, it matters little from whom or whence they came. Now the dog, though not what I should select to follow my horse, shows what he is — nothing sporting, but of a definite sort, a well-made and handsome one of his kind; and, by-the-by, goes in capital form, and, as a dog, looks like a little gentleman.

The "Maid of Masca," under which title the white specimen was bought as a pure Arab, though about as pure as the London liquid of the same colour, is highly prized by her owner, to whom, if her late master does not feel he owes an eternal debt of gratitude for buying her, he has not a spark of it within him. She is regarded by her master, and, doubtless, by such friends as such a master may be supposed to have, as a "beautiful creature." I do not say that, as an animal, she is ugly; on the contrary, rather pretty: but, as a horse, may we "never see" her "like again!"

Now to pick her to pieces (may she never be put together again!). Her owner boasts of her fine forehand. I fully agree with him that her neck is long enough, and a little to spare; but, from the pommel of the saddle to her bosom, a well-made donkey is as long. Her head is of a no-meaning kind, that might belong, in turnpike term, to any "horse, mare, gelding, mule, or ass," and is set on so that it is fortunate for her master, and her, that the way she

carries it meets his approbation, for she could carry it in no other. She does not pull; but from the position of the piece of mechanism that is meant for a bit in her mouth, it is evident she bores pretty comfortably, and costs her owner a new pair of lemon kids every time he mounts her. She is of that description of white that an engraving cannot fully show ; namely, having a flesh-coloured nose, and eyes of the same hue. She is the "milk-white." Now there is a breed of "bone-whites," of a bluish tinge, with blackish muzzles, manes, tails, and legs : some of which are not only handsome, but good. But the "Maid of Masca" has a nose precisely the colour of her master's physiognomy, and if that and the mare's nose were both protruded through a hole, as much of energy would be developed in the one as the other. She is going in a gait that is a kind of mongrel one, half gallop and half canter; her fore-legs are like those of the other horse, sufficiently before her, but the difference is this: he playfully puts his before him, hers look as if they were drawn there by some agency not her own, and appear as if they never would come back again, while her hind ones are left behind, as if she held them to be useless to progression. If she were stopped short, she would come on her head, and would have abundance of time for this before her haunches could be brought under her. Of course, such a man on such a horse never contemplates a leap. If he did, the utmost those weak thin haunches and back could do for her would be to carry her over a bit of water that, lengthening her accus-

tomed stretch in going, a foot or two would suffice to cover.

It will be seen she is not going merely totally uncollected, but unconnected; she is leading with the left, or near leg; whereas, to go connectedly with her hind ones, she should lead with the off one. She must change this, for her motion to the rider must be as if her back was broken, and the fatigue to herself would knock her up in a mile; it being, at the same time, a matter of doubt if she could last a mile in a gallop, go as she might. Her gallop is just that of a cow; in truth, I have seen a light heifer a better goer; and, if we get treated with a portion of the Maid of Masca as well as the heifer in sausages, they will both be turned to their best account.

The simple young gentleman — who certainly had nothing to do with the exploits of which the statue he is passing is a trophy—may be anything for which no talent at all, plenty of self-esteem, and a proportionate quantity of ignorance, qualify him. One thing is certain, he cannot be, in its strict sense, a gentleman. His seat he, of course, calls a military one; military enough, against riding like a horseman, it certainly is; and, doubtless, with his pair of spurs for show, he considers he has all the cut of one of a crack light cavalry regiment. I rather think, if such a thing got one day into Lord Cardigan's regiment,his lordship would bolt him, as we do a badger, on the second. He looks, in short, one of those young gentleman that a man might abstain from kicking lest the dainty bit of humanity might go home, tell his mamma,

and make her miserable. His glass, that is dangling to show the gold chain to which it is attached, he has, no doubt, by long practice, learned to support by sticking it under his eyebrow, a feat that gives a man the appearance of frowning fearfully on one side of his face, while he looks somewhat vacant on the other; and of staring straight with one eye, while the other is in evident confidential communication with his neighbour the nose.

Reader, Mr. Tickle-me-tenderly and the Maid of Masca are quite fancy sketches, nor had I any particular individuals of either kind in my mind in making them. Probably we shall never see either in such a locality as the "workmen" are careering over; but, at any fancy-fair in Hyde Park, they, or their prototypes, will most certainly be conspicuous objects.

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PRACTICAL HORSEMANSHIP.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION. — HORSEMANSHIP NATURAL TO THE ENGLISH. — PECULIARITIES OF FRENCH HORSEMANSHIP. — WHO IS THE BEST HORSEMAN? — VALUE OF GOOD NERVE AND GOOD TEMPER. — A FIRM SEAT. — COMPARISON BETWEEN LONG AND SHORT RIDERS. — WEIGHT NO OBSTACLE TO GOOD HORSEMANSHIP.

ALL who have ever ridden will admit that their first step towards horsemanship consisted in getting astride something or other. Most probably a stick was the first supposed representative of the animal over which they hoped some day to exercise control.

Arrived at mature years, they mounted a horse; this they will readily also admit as their second step towards equestrianism. But it may be somewhat more difficult to find the man who would admit that his second step was not only the second, but the last. Yet with thousands such is the case; but with this exception: in step the

second the horse we will suppose stood still: he then got into motion; but though the horse *got on* with his rider, it very frequently happened, that, figuratively speaking, the rider never got on with his horse — that is, not with his horsemanship.

A wretched half-starved ragged representative of human nature, factotum to a pettyfogging attorney, is said to have, on some occasion, pompously introduced himself as first, principal, and only clerk to Mr. So and So; thus has the getting on a horse's back, and his moving on, been first, second, and only steps of many towards horsemanship.

That England, speaking generally, is a nation of horsemen, there can be no doubt; but not more so than some others: the Arab is as competent a horseman in his way as we are in ours; that we are superior horsemen to any of the nations within a few hundred miles of us, we may safely boast; and here, to be a good horseman, brings a degree of *éclat* not found elsewhere.

The term horseman carries with it very different significations, in accordance with the way in which it is used: if, in distinguishing between a man walking, another in a carriage, and a third on horseback, we say there comes or goes a horseman, it simply states that such a person is on a horse; but if, after seeing a few muffs on horses, we saw the Marquis of Anglesey coming, and should say,

"Here comes a horseman," the terms would apply very differently, and to the initiated would convey more than a lengthened description could effect.

There is no people among whom the horse is so generally used for amusement as in England. In neighbouring countries he is also used in various ways for man's amusement; but there it chiefly consists in parade. A Frenchman is gratified in riding on the Boulevards or in the Bois de Boulogne; but few foreigners would take a ride on Marlborough Down, or in its forest. They are pleased in riding where they and their horses can be seen; but put them on the finest hunter that ever crossed country, and let him lounge along with the gait and quietude of a racehorse at exercise, they would consider the horse a positive brute, and riding where "les belles dames" could not see them, they would look upon as positive penance. An Englishman in taking such a ride does so from a love of country scenery; and such men mostly are attached to country pursuits. When this is the case, as he rides along, hunting comes across his mind, and he anticipates many a gallop over the country around him on the horse he is riding: he sees a tempting fence present itself; thinks a little practice will do no harm to himself or his horse; gathers up his reins and has a "shy" at it; his nag tops it cleverly; he pats his neck, and chuckles at the

thought of shortly mounting the pink and showing the way. He finds he is on soft and elastic turf; so he gives his horse a gentle breather, and probably a view halloo or two as his nag goes snorting and striding along. "Who-ho! Old Liberty!" he cries, pulling up his nag, and again patting him. The horse on stopping gives a sonorous blow of his nose—sure sign that the pipes are clear. "That's the ticket, old fellow," cries the master; and then quietly lounges along as before, his spirits heightened by the exercise and the exhilarating thoughts it has brought into play.

The Frenchman has no idea of such feelings or such excitement from such a cause, for hunting with an established pack of hounds is, with very few exceptions, contrary to his habits: and, in fact, Englishmen are the only people, speaking of them collectively, who hunt for the sole pleasure of the chase. It is one of the most exhilarating pleasures an Englishman enjoys; and this renders him, as a horseman across country, unmatched by any nation in the world; and, take him all in all as a general rider, the man who with a firm seat, fine hands, and good judgment, can make the most of his horse in crossing a difficult country is undoubtedly the best description of horseman, for such a man can ride *any*where.

Men of education are pretty much the same in all countries as regards liberality of sentiment;

and where the habits, manners, or qualities of others are depreciated merely because they differ from our own, it is the result of a narrow mind. This is a prevalent failing among the lower orders of Englishmen. Our friend Jonathan has it "pretty considerable;" and, like such orders of Englishmen, is fully convinced that whatever is done differently from what he is accustomed to ee, is worthy of reprehension and ridicule. The more liberal mind will admire whatever is done well in its way, without reference to where it is done or who does it.

I feel, as a sportsman, proud in saying that most of our hunting men could show Monsieur, or foreigners from any part of the globe, the nearest way to meet hounds, and also how to ride with them; but let us in candour admit that there is many a foreigner who could give many a hunting man in return very valuable lessons in scientific horsemanship, and particularly as regards "hands," that would be found beneficial in crossing any country.

The term horseman is both positive and relative. It is positive; because it points out a man who is an adept in horsemanship, as one acquainted with the habits and capabilities of the animal, and who can, on scientific principles and by scientific practice, turn those capabilities to their fullest account, whether for show or use; and the man who does

this the most effectually, with the least infliction of pain or suffering on the animal in the shortest time, is the best horseman; if he does this, he is a horseman, let him come from where he may. On the other hand, the term is relative; for, in stating that a man is a horseman, the question might be put in what way is he such? For we have horsemen of all sorts—riding-school horsemen, hussar and lancer horsemen: Ducrow was perfect in *his* way; we have racing and hunting horsemen, and wager-trotting horsemen—of all of which classes we have adepts each in his own walk.

We have men who can ride well enough in several ways to be called fair, perhaps good, horsemen in each; but the chances are they will not be perfect in such a case in any. It is quite possible a man may ride a race, ride to hounds, and on the road, and be a thorough horseman in all these ways: he will, however, in nine cases in ten, excel in one more than the others; this superiority arising from various circumstances. But I should hold it absolutely impossible for a man to ride so as to be admired in a German regiment of hussars, and on the flat at Newmarket: sufficient practice to render him perfect in the one would mar his proficiency in the other. Robinson is no doubt perfect as a jockey: there are very perfect horsemen in the German hussars; but fancy Robinson in their ranks on a field day, or Corporal

Kollman riding the Duke of Rutland's Nina for the two years' old. Neither Robinson nor the filly would be the better for the day's work.

If a man contemplates becoming a perfect horseman, he should consider in what way his riding will be chiefly required, and make himself master of that. If he only contemplates road riding, if he acquire a neat, easy, and firm seat, with good hands, he will do well enough; and, having gained these, he may be satisfied. If he means to be a hunting man, he will find it will require a still firmer seat, stronger arms, and far stronger nerves, without which he will never become a "workman" across country; and, as to race riding, no man need hope to arrive at any perfection as a jockey, unless from a boy he has been more or less in the habit of riding race-horses.

There are two things all but indispensable to the man who wishes to become perfect as a horseman — good nerve and good temper: without the first he will want confidence; and without the second, he will neither have patience to be taught himself or to teach his horse.

So far as seat is concerned, a great deal depends on the formation of the man. With very few exceptions, I never saw short chubby-made men neat horsemen; and without any exception, I never saw such persons with an easy and graceful seat. Such

men are mostly very round in the thigh; a formation very much against a firm seat, without which no man can be a horseman. I am not now alluding to this in relation to the probability of being thrown; but without a firm seat a man cannot have either a delicate hand or a strong hold of his horse's head when necessary.

I will endeavour to illustrate why he cannot. We will suppose a person endeavouring to untie an intricate knot in a cord, one end of which is fastened to something moveable or stationary. If standing steadily on the ground, he would effect his object; but, instead of allowing him firm foothold, we will place him standing on the round of a ladder. Here, not being able to balance himself steadily, his body inclines forward — his untying stops while he rights himself. He then begins again. This time he sways backwards, holds on by the cord to save himself, of course pulls it tight — and finds, on again looking at the perverse knot he had succeeded in loosening, it is drawn tighter than ever. Thus we see we lose the command of our hands, unless we can keep our body firm. It may be said that a seaman will stand on a rope, or lean against a spar, and in that situation furl or unfurl a sail. This is quite true; but let it be remembered that here the man *does* keep his body firm against that on which he leans, and he only sways *with* the vessel and the rope he is altering. So if

the rider keeps his seat firm, and his body only goes with his horse, he will have perfect command of his hands: but I have seen many men standing in their stirrups, with their body swaying about in all directions; and in such a case such a rider is, in a mitigated degree, in the dilemma of the man standing on the round of the ladder.

But, as some proof that short round-made men have not the firm seat of others, I knew a steeple-chase rider, who rode a good deal a few years back, in Warwick, Worcester, Stafford, and the surrounding shires, whom I would at any time back at even, to tumble off: I do not mean because his horse tumbled also; but he fairly rolled, like a fat Bacchus from his tub.

In allusion to short men as riders it may be said that jockeys are low in stature. I grant they are so, as to the actual measurement of inches, and comparing them with men following other pursuits; but so far from jockeys being short-made, as regards proportion, they are tall in comparison with heavier men. For instance, we will say a man measures about five feet. This is unquestionably a low stature; but let it be borne in mind this man can ride eight stone, so he is absolutely tall in comparison with the man who cannot ride less than twelve. The former, measuring sixty inches, is in height eight inches and a quarter to the stone: so, to bring the latter to

the same proportions, as regards height with weight, he ought to stand eight feet. Thus, when I object to short-made men as riders, it will be seen that the fact of jockeys being low in height is no refutation of my opinion, for they are symmetrically made.

There is a current notion that tall men give the horse more trouble to carry them than short ones. If this was the firm opinion of those competent to decide the point, I should not venture a doubt upon it; but the question is still *sub judice*, and I hold the notion itself to be at best but a *half-truth*.

Somerville speaks of "the tall, plump, brawny youth," as compared with the "light Pygmean race," and alludes to the former envying the latter in a clipping run: but if he mentions the youth as tall, he also concludes him to be "plump" and "brawny;" and I have always considered the distress of horses in carrying tall men to arise from their usually accompanying weight, not from their height; for in what does the difference of short, middle height, and tall consist? A man of five feet five is short; one of five feet eight, middle-sized; and he of six feet, tall. Here the difference between Nos. 1. and 3. is only seven inches. This we will suppose to be made up by length of body, thighs, and legs: so probably the sole of the foot of the six-feet man is not

three inches nearer the ground than that of the man of five feet five. But, supposing the difference in height to consist chiefly in leg and thigh, so far from that being against the horse, it is often in his favour; for it is quite clear that the inches below the stirrup buckle will not weigh as much as the same number above it. And in truth, as some plump gentlemen are made, if we were to abstract a thick piece all round just above the seat of the saddle, we should get away, in point of weight, something like a stone to the inch slice.

When men are tall and slightly made, though four inches make a wonderful difference in a man's height, it would make but little as to his weight in any thing but a race.

There is one little disadvantage increased length subjects a rider to: viz. the increased length of stirrup leather. The shorter this length is, the easier it is to keep it stationary. A tall man should, therefore, be particularly careful in getting a steady seat and a firm hold of his saddle with his thighs and knees: where they have not, this increased length of stirrup leather, allowing longer sway to the leg and foot has given rise to the idea that tall men are apt to, what is technically termed, "swag" on the horse. Tall bad horsemen certainly often do this; but I have seen short ones work their saddle flaps most per-

severingly with their legs, and grind the inside of their boot tops faster while riding than their servant did pumice stoning. This motion of the legs is as odious in appearance as any failing a horseman can manifest.

Hunting men are quite aware, that being a heavy weight in no way militates against any one being a fine horseman; and when proportionably and properly mounted, such men often "go" in the field in a most wonderful way — in short, in the first flight; but when they do, they are mostly symmetrically made, in which case there is no reason why they should not be graceful, as well as good, riders; but, though I have seen many thousands of persons with hounds, I do not call to mind one man of—say sixteen stone and low in stature — who was such.

CHAPTER II.

DIFFERENT MODES OF BECOMING A HORSEMAN — THEIR RESULTS. — MILITARY RIDING. — CLASS OF RIDERS WHO WILL DERIVE BENEFIT FROM THIS WORK. — MASTER HARRY HIEOVER AND MR. JESSAMY.

THERE are three modes, by any of which a man may become a horseman. The one is, by putting him on ass, pony, galloway, and horse, each in succession, as a boy, and allowing him to tumble about till he learns to stick on, in which case practice will teach him, certainly, a firm seat and probably good hands; but, further than this, by being accustomed, first to suffer from, and afterwards to be quite aware of, the various tricks and habits of horses, he will learn to be aware of the symptoms preluding their being brought into practice, and eventually become competent to counteract them.

The next mode is, supposing a person to have arrived at manhood without crossing a horse, to place him under a proper instructor, who will certainly save him many a fall by putting him on a docile animal, and step by step leading the pupil on to horsemanship.

It may be objected, that the last mode would only teach the riding of a trained and quiet horse, and I allow the full force of this objection; and if the pupil expressed a wish of simply being taught to ride well enough to navigate his steed up and down Rotten Row, as some friend probably learns to manage a boat on the Serpentine, the one will probably never be able to encounter a clipping run in the stiff parts of Northamptonshire, or the other a chopping sea in any part of the Bay of Biscay. But if the learner of equestrianism says—"Make me a horseman," seat and hands can certainly be learned in a riding-school quite as well as in any situation I know of—no bad foundation (if obtained) to becoming a horseman; and there are means and appliances in a riding-school to teach something more than the mere walking, trotting, and cantering a kind of automaton horse round its inclosure.

As a boy I believe I may say I could ride any thing, and cared little for pace, fence, or country, or whether I could hold my horse or not; but when I was put on the back of a very highly dressed *manège* horse, and was directed what to do with rein and heel, and when the voice and whip of the professor induced the horse to rear, put his two fore feet on the wall, and in that position using hind and fore feet perpetrate a kind of

sidelong canter half way down the school, I was not a little astonished, and found sitting leaps over hurdles, gates, and fences, much more easy than balancing my body in this rampant crab-like pace, if pace it could be called.

I further found, to my unbounded surprise, that this horse would vault on the plain surface of the school, when telegraphed to do so, as high as a hunter at a gate, and this several times in succession.

Although as obedient to my riding-school tutor as a conceited young cub who had rode fox-hunting could be expected to be, there was one point at issue between us: he advocated the lengthened stirrup leather, straight knee, and erect military seat. I pertinaciously adhered to the reverse, fully impressed with the conviction, that, having shown the way at fences to some men in the hunting field, and exhibited with success on a racecourse, I must know what riding was, better than all the school tutors in existence. This would, no doubt, have been fatal to my progress, had I been learning military horsemanship; but as I was only placed there to learn hands, I condescended to be instructed in this particular; and both in that important qualification and, indeed, in firmness of seat, I profited much by my school practice.

We now come to the third, and by far the best

and most certain, mode of making a horseman. This is by putting a boy on horseback very early in life, and also putting him under the care of a good horseman, as his instructor. Practice will certainly in a general way teach a man of ordinary ability a good and ready mode of doing that which he has constant occasion to do; but it does not always follow that by practice he learns the *very* best mode of doing it: he does it sufficiently well perhaps to answer his purpose; but if there is a better and quicker mode of effecting his object, he loses time by not adopting it, and does not effect his object nearly so well. If a boy or man has sense and temper enough to be taught, he will save an infinity of time, expense, and probably danger or hurt by learning: if not; in the case of riding, let him get a severe fall or two, or some equal inconvenience; he will then learn that there are others who know a little more than himself, and he will possibly afterwards be willing to take instruction from any competent hand.

The result of these three different modes of learning horsemanship would probably be this: — The one who learns to ride by sheer practice, will become very probably a good bold practical rider, but not a scientific one. The one taught chiefly by precept may, nay will, become more or less scientific; but will never get the perfectly easy

and natural seat or look of him who began riding at an early age. He will never look as if a seat on horseback and on a chair was equally natural to him; he will always appear artificial. I do not mean to say he may not be made to ride well, possibly boldly; and, if well mounted, may in two or three seasons get to ride across country, as well as many, perhaps most, out. Still he will never shake off the certain artistical manner of doing things, inseparable from being first taught, and then practising, instead of the learning and practising having gone hand in hand from boyhood or childhood.

I have, perhaps, used the term artistically, so as to imply that doing a thing thus, that is, like an artist, is synonymous to describing it as being done well. I grant it is so; but the different modes of doing it is great: for instance, a Robinson, Templeman, or Nat, take hold of their reins artistically; so do Powell or Oliver; that is, they do so like men accustomed to do it; but they do not do so like a dragoon. He is taught but one way of taking up his bridle rein and one way of mounting his horse; the others take their rein up in a seemingly careless way, but still in a proper one. The troop horse is trained to stand still till mounted, and has a hint to move on; so the same precise way of mounting can always be practised. But the race or steeple-chase horses, and hunter,

are not thus obedient; some from vice will bite or kick, if they get a chance, or perhaps plunge before or after mounting, or sometimes both; others from excitement fidget about and away from the rider, before he gets his foot in the stirrup; others, the moment he has done so: therefore such men are obliged to get on their horses as circumstances permit, — that is, as they can. Still they do so like artists. It would not quite have done for a man to stand twisting his fingers in Alarm's mane, and then get on, or attempt to get on him in accordance with prescribed riding-school practice; he would have been half eaten before he got into his saddle.

The school-taught pupil gets up, we will say, quite properly, and rides the same; that is, if all the horses he has to mount or ride are in habit and temper about on a par with the one on which he took lessons. But suppose they are quite different; what becomes of the one prescribed rule he has learnt? Put him out of this, and he would be quite astray: he would want the resources under different circumstances, that varied practice only can teach; and in all he does there is ever a mannerism, or, to use an expression for the occasion, a one-wayism, that detects the man taught late in life; for, to take a liberty with a line of Goldsmith's, —

"Let school-taught pride dissemble all it can,"
It leaves its habits stamp'd upon the man.

Let us cast an eye on a squadron or regiment of cavalry, whether standing, walking, or trotting their horses: every man's hand is in the same position, and in the same place. This looks extremely soldier-like and well, for uniformity sake; but let it be remembered that to enable this to be done, every horse is schooled till they all carry their heads alike, or at least enough so to enable each man to have a proper command of his horse's mouth while holding his rein hand or arm precisely the same as his right and left comrades. Thus, with four hundred horses all taught the same habits, carriage, and evolutions, one general rule suffices for four hundred men to make them do all that is required of them; and the whole machinery of man and horse, from day to day and year to year, performs the same thing in the same way; and such mode of instruction would suffice for the private person also, if, like the soldier, he always rode the same horse, or one with the same habits; always rode him under the same circumstances, and wanted him to perform merely the same routine of duty.

The soldier requires good hands, and, in a greater or less degree, they are all brought to have such; but he only wants hands, or rather a hand, to make a particular horse do a particular

thing. His business is somewhat like that of the driver of a locomotive engine: there is a particular handle to increase or diminish its speed, or stop it; each engine made on the same construction is managed in the same way, with a little variation as to the facility with which the machinery is propelled, retarded, or stopped. It is thus with troop horses; the same signals of heel and hand, lightly or forcibly used, as the disposition of the horse may require, make them all do the same thing. But the case is far different with the jockey, steeple-chase rider, hunting man, or even with him who only rides on the road, if he rides a variety of horses, for he will find that he will want, not only good hands for a horse, but hands that are good for all sorts of horses.

A man may say that he merely wishes to ride for amusement, the show of the thing, air, or exercise, or the whole combined, and that he will only ride horses broken to suit his hand and seat, or, at all events, that go so as to suit them. Well and good; and, if circumstances and his pursuits enable him to do this, he is quite right in doing it; but he must not flatter himself that he is a horseman: a neat and pretty rider he may be; and if so, and he only intends riding in Hyde or the Regent's Park, taking a canter to make a morning call at Fulham, or escorting ladies at a watering place, he is (on a well-broken easy-going

horse) horseman enough for such purposes; but if he means "to ride among horsemen or in the field," he will find that, in old coaching phrase, "he wants another hand"—meaning that two (such as he owns) are not enough to be of much use to him in such circumstances and situations.

I have stated that *most* cavalry soldiers have more or less good hands; but I must unequivocally assert, and this without reservation, that *all* good horsemen have. By such I do not mean mere bold, hard-riding, straight-going men across country; many such have hands only fit to wield a sledge hammer, and the consequence is they cannot ride a delicate-mouthed, gentlemanly-going horse, and those they do ride soon get mouths as dead as the anvil the sledge strikes upon; such men are only "bruising riders," but not good horsemen. What sort of a jockey would a man be with such hands? He could only ride a boring brute like Eclipse; or, if he merely possessed the hand of the dragoon, he could only ride a horse whose mouth was amenable to even the signal the bit gives. How would he manage if, in the first race, he had to ride a resolute horse that gets his head nearly down to his knees, with no more mouth than a towed barge, about as easy to bring up, pulling a man's arms from their sockets? He must not be let loose, or he would run himself to a stand. If held too forcibly, he shakes his head,

and thrusts it out; and the reins being knotted, he would pull a rider out of his saddle unless he "gave and took with him." He is then put on a harum-scarum colt, that wildly throws up his head, staring at the sky, and, but for the martingale, making toothpicks of his ears — an accommodation the jockey avoids by a close seat, the head and body a little held back, and the hands steadying his horse's head as best he can. He is then put on a nervous, meek, timid two-years'-old filly, with a mouth of silk: a rude touch of her mouth would throw her all abroad, a sudden shifting of the seat would alarm her, and seeing or feeling a hand raised would frighten her to death. How during such a day would the one-way schooling succeed? What, in such three cases, becomes of the thumbs turned up, the hand so many inches above the pummel, and the elbow fixed to a given point of the side? In either of such cases all school rule as to riding a well-broken horse, would avail but very little indeed: in either case the best of hands would be requisite; but in each they must be brought into effect in a different manner.

The steeple-chase rider requires hands nearly as good as those of the jockey. I say *nearly*, for these reasons: he does not ride such young, half-broken animals as the former does. Steeple-chase horses are not usually colts; they are practised before they are engaged in stakes; consequently,

more or less, know their business. They know what the bit means; and if disposed to resist its influence, it does not arise from sheer ignorance, so, by force or humouring, they are to be made amenable to it, without getting alarmed; and, further, it is not calculated upon, in a general way, that a steeple-chase will come to so nice a point at the finish as a flat race; so if a horse is allowed to, or will, take a little liberty with himself in the run, it is not so fatal as where it is presumed, or perhaps known, that, barring unforeseen contingencies, there will not be more than a length difference between horses at the winning post. Most determined, headstrong, and sometimes desperate horses the steeple-chase rider has to contend with; but it is not the wild riotous conduct of the colt, as often proceeding from fright as from vice. We may sometimes bully an experienced horse out of his tricks or display of stubbornness; but it would not do with a colt prior to starting for a heavy stake: he must be controlled, but, in a general way, soothed, even if we know he deserves a sound thrashing.

Many steeple-chase horses, as well as old race-horses, are extremely nervous before starting, and even when going, but it arises from a different cause to that which makes a two-years'-old so: the former are nervous because they know what they are going about. Caressing and speaking kindly

and encouragingly to such will usually re-assure and pacify them: they will not be alarmed by a man moving his hand, or judiciously shifting his seat, because they have found a rider do so without its producing inconvenience to them. But a timid two-years'-old is alarmed at *every thing;* a crowd alarms her, so does seeing a dozen horses by her side and around her. She has no definite cause of nervousness, like the old race-horse; but she apprehends danger, and feels excitement from any thing new to her. If she only feared the jockey, his caresses would probably soon pacify her, but she would be equally alarmed if a crow flew nearer to her than usual. No school education as to horsemanship would, therefore, put a man on his guard against such vagaries; and riding a well-trained horse goes a very little way towards making a man a good general horseman in difficult situations, or with difficult horses to manage.

I have stated that there are three ways in which people become more or less horsemen: by practice only; by practice joined with judicious instruction; and by instruction as a beginning, and practice afterwards. I scarcely dare flatter myself that I can be of any use to the first of these; for, in all probability, if he has any faults in his riding qualifications and habits, practice has so far rendered them habitual to him, that he would not be

willing, or very likely able, to correct them, even supposing he might be led to think my ideas on the subject more correct than his own.

To the one who has had the joint advantage of practice with good instruction I can be of no use; for he will know quite as much as I can tell him, and probably more. I shall therefore confine my advice to the one who, from beginning late in life, has had but little practice; for to him I may presume I can give advice that may contribute both to his ease and safety.

I am quite sure there are thousands in the first situation, as there are men varying in correctness, or its reverse, as regards taste, judgment, and intentions, in all matters, and of course in those connected with horses and horsemanship; for however profoundly ignorant men may be on any given subject, if it is one they have ever considered at all, they have formed some opinion on it; nor is it by any means an unfrequent case, that the less a person knows, the more fixed is his opinion, and the more pertinaciously will he adhere to it.

If such a man asked my opinion on any subject (and I knew his characteristic), I should, instead of giving my opinion, get from him what was his: be it what it might, I should assure him it was quite correct, and send him away pleased with himself and with me; I should be set down by

him as a very clever intelligent fellow, instead of being thought quite the reverse, which would infallibly be the case had I given an opinion counter to his own. That some persons do take queer notions in their heads respecting equitation, and the equine, the following anecdote will in a certain degree demonstrate: —

A few years since, a friend of mine, an excellent sportsman and very fine horseman, out of pure mischief, one morning brought a young gentleman with him, who introduced himself with the flattering exordium, that, as he intended buying a couple of horses for riding during the summer, and "taking to" hunting in the winter, he wished to be introduced to me. I smiled; it was of course set down by this Jemmy Jessamy as one of gratified pride in receiving him, my friend looking about as wickedly gratified as our arch enemy can be supposed to look when he has perpetrated any thing to annoy us. I soon learned that this delicate slice of humanity was heir to a rich stock-broker, who had just retired from business, and had, like old Norval, kept "his only son at home." Like some embryo fox-hunters, he had picked up a few slang phrases, as Master Stephen did (from some Bobadil in the horse way), probably considering them indispensable to a man who was going "to take to" fox-hunting. He was, in short, a living antithesis to any thing one

could tolerate as companion, or even acquaintance.

A few days after this he called on me *solus*, with the important information that he had purchased a hunter. "Can't he go, though?" said he, with an intended knowing wink. "He was Lord ———'s favourite hunter."

Now, supposing such to have been the case, it struck me that the WAS was rather an indefinite expression; and I asked Mr. Jessamy, with submission, if he had inquired WHEN he was; for perfectly well knowing the commission stable where he told me he had bought the hunter, it struck me as about the last place in London to which one of that nobleman's horses would have found his way; and further, I knew his lordship as one not disposed to sell a favourite who *was* so *at the time*. However, I made no further remark; nor did Jessamy reply to my question as to the *when*, further than he had got from Jem, without his master's knowledge, all about the horse from the time he was backed. I thought I could with safety have *backed* Jem to have had the best of the day's work; in short, that he had sold Mr. Jessamy about a hundred and twenty lies at a penny apiece, thus giving him fair value for his half-sovereign.

"Have you ever hunted in Leicestershire?" inquired Jessamy.

I had had that honour, but did not pretend to be a Leicestershire man.

"Oh! then *you'll* understand me when I tell you I have got one that can charge an ox-fence, switch at a rasper, skim ridge and furrow, go in and out clever, and do all that sort of thing," continued he, with gesticulatory illustrations of the way in which he conceived such exploits to be performed by horses.

"Really, Mr. Jessamy," said I, "you overwhelm me with sporting phrases." These I well remembered to have read as a boy, but whether he had got them from book or Bobadil, I did not inquire.

Wishing to turn, or rather conclude, his interesting information, I remarked, "You are going to ride, I perceive," looking at a pair of regular hussar spurs fastened to his boots.

"Yes, I am; I suppose you guessed so by my spurs; — tasty, are they not? — the same the Seventh wear. What do you think of this?" continued Jessamy, showing a twisted, party-coloured, whalebone whip-stick, about the size of the top of a fly-rod, with a silver collar and ring to it carrying a silk cord and tassel; — "neat, is it not, and rather spicy, eh?"

I assured him it was so; adding, that I had promised to send Bill Scott a whip, but after seeing the Jessamy, I should certainly present him

with one of those instead of a jockey whip, being quite sure he would prefer it greatly.

"Jessamy," replied my visitor,—"the Jessamy whip; not bad that. Come, I'll send you one for naming it, and will tell the man I got it of to sell them as Jessamies."

He now put in a strong plea that I should go and be gratified by the sight of his hunter. "Come," said he, "a hundred and sixty is worth looking at—that was the price; sporting, was'nt it?"

"Quite sporting," I replied; "you've been laying the long odds."

"What's that?" said Jessy—"something new."

"Oh, not at all!" I replied; "I see it done every day."

"I'm glad of that," said Jessy.

"Why so?" said I.

"Because I do like to do sporting-like."

I quite agreed that a hundred and sixty was worth seeing, but very much doubted seeing what was equivalent to the sum; so I pleaded being particularly engaged at home.

I had not congratulated myself more than an hour on being left alone, when, to my perfect consternation, I was informed that the gentleman who had left me an hour ago had called at the door on horseback, and begged I would come out to him. There he was, on an almost white horse,

that in point of size might have induced one to believe it was the one seen from the Devizes road cut on the turf, but worse proportioned, animated. The next thing I saw was the twin brother of the "spicy" bit of whalebone he fully believed I should send to our northern jockey, Scott. "True to the touch," quoted I to myself, on seeing it. He presented it to me with a burlesqued military salute. "Pray," said I, "do you intend to sport this little gem in the hunting field?"

"Oh, dear no!" said he; "I have bought a regular for that,—such a whopper!—won't it rattle the bushes for 'em when we're looking for a fox!"

"I am sure," said I, "your assistance to the hounds in finding will be invaluable."

"Now," said he, "own the truth; you don't see such a horse as this every day?"

I most sincerely allowed I did not.

"Looks like hunting, eh?" said Jessamy.

"Unquestionably," said I, scarcely able to keep my countenance; "he has every appearance of having *been hunted*."

"Is that a better term than looking like hunting?" said he.

"*Sometimes* it is," replied I.

"Nice legs, has'nt he?" said Jessamy, squatting down directly before the horse, and passing his hand down the front of the cannon bone.

"Admirable," replied I.

"Now," said Jessy, "do tell me, for this is a term I don't quite understand: — Jem said he was very clean in his legs."

"Did Jem mean himself or the horse?" said I.

"Why," replied Jessy, "you're rather dull to-day, Master Harry Hicover; the horse, of course."

"Then," said I, "he meant they had been well washed, for certainly he could mean nothing else."

"Now," said he, "how do you like my saddle? — tasty, is'nt it?"

"Wilkinson and Kidd's," said I, "I am sure," seeing a thing quite small enough, but a great deal too badly made, for a riding boy's exercise saddle, and this quite on the animal's shoulder, with an Isle of Skye back behind it.

"Guess again," said Jessy, with a most indescribable look, half quaint and the rest foolish.

I very truly professed my inability to hit on the maker.

"You see, you don't know every thing, Master Harry," said the delighted Jessy.

"I own," said I, "the *soft* impeachment."

"Now," said he, "my friend Jem gave me a wrinkle in this, and I will give it you. I got it where they have more practice than most saddlers, for they make for exportation. I got it in Holborn."

"It is really a pity," said I, "they limit their exportations to saddlery."

"Oh!" replied he, "they hav'nt time for any thing else."

"Nor, perhaps," replied I, "would find demand for such *articles* as came into my idea at the moment, if they had."

"Well," said he, "I got bridle, martingale, and all from the same place."

"I guessed as much," said I; "but as you have a nose-band, why not have a rein running to that? you would then have this advantage — if the ring martingale broke, you would have the nose one in reserve."

"I never thought of that," said Jessy, looking most innocently.

"Get it done," replied I; "it is all that's wanting to make you complete."

"But," said I, "Mr. Jessamy, as you told me you were going to ride, I conclude the Park is your destination; I must not take up your time further."

"Well," said he, with a somewhat mortified and still more perplexed look, "I must tell you about that: I *did* mean to call and give you the whip *after* my ride, but my horse would not go there; for when I got to Cumberland Gate, he would turn up Cumberland Place."

"Thinking of the stables near Montague Square and Jem, I suppose," said I.

"Why, I suppose he was," said Jessy; "so as

he was disposed to come this way, I called on you, and that's the truth. Now tell me, what am I to do?"

"Why, get your ride in the Park to be sure," said I.

"But I tell you he won't go there,—I'm sure he won't."

"Come," said I, "get up."

"I will if I can," said Jessy; "that's the worst of hunters, they are all so high."

"That depends on the sort of hunter," said I, somewhat equivocally; "but there (getting the nag in the kennel, and Jessamy on the pavement), now you'll do." After hopping about some time on his right toe, by one energetic effort he got into his saddle, gathered up the curb rein (when he found out which of the two it was), and turning his thumb knuckle up directly perpendicularly, he reined in the nag. It struck me that it might have been something like this mode of reining in that prevented Jessy making good his entrance to the Park; and I concluded that he had probably reversed the usual proceedings of horsemen, so the less the horse was disposed to go the way he wanted him, the tighter he lugged at the reins: the moment he let them loose, the animal walked *somewhere*, and that *happened* to bring him up to me.

Seeing that as Jessy had ordered himself and

his bridle, it was probable that he would have sa
at my door stationary, as one of the sentries a
the Horse Guards, *ad infinitum*, I recommende
his taking up the snaffle rein, which he effected
still he stood stock still.

"Well," said I, "now, good morning."

"Adieu," said Jessy, kissing the disengage
hand, but without moving.

"Come," said I, "let us see you in motion."
To effect this, he gave his horse a touch of th
whalebone on his off haunch, but holding hard
and doubtlessly with the right rein shorter tha
the left,—the horse turned his tail to the street
and stood staring me in the face at my door
laughing outright, I took the steed by the hea
and put him straight.

"Pray," said I, "Mr. Jessamy, what do yo
sport spurs for?"

"Oh, I'll show you," said he, "when I go
hunting; but I don't want them here."

"Then why wear them?"

"Oh, I think a man looks so spooney witho
them."

"And sometimes with," replied I.

"Not bad that," said Jessy.

"Come," said I, "loosen your rein and give hi
a touch of the Sevenths." Whether from a desi
to show he was not afraid to use them, or fro
not knowing the proper mode of doing so,

know not; but giving both legs a full swing up to his horse's flanks, which, from the shortness of his back ribs, it gave the rider's heels the full half segment of a circle to effect, and the rowels being new, I conclude that (to oblige Jessy with a bit of slang) he "corked him pretty tight:" off started the astonished animal, and was soon half down the street. Laughing immoderately, in which some bystanders joined, and a butcher's boy calling out, "there he *goes*," I still could see a confused sort of motion with Jessy's arms; but, like Mazeppa, "on — on" he went, till turning a corner, — probably the opposite one to that he wished, — the hunter and his master disappeared.

I left town a day or two afterwards, and saw no more of Jessy till I really did meet him in the field. Of his exploits there, more at a future time.

CHAPTER III.

DIFFERENT SEATS FOR DIFFERENT KINDS OF HORSES ILLUSTRATED. — RACING AND HUNTING SEATS. — ILLUSTRATIVE ANECDOTE. — SEAT BEST ADAPTED FOR ROAD-RIDING. — LONG STIRRUP LEATHER WHEN OBJECTIONABLE.

I HAVE endeavoured to show that, so far as hand goes, — that is, as to its position and fixed place, — it would be impossible to adhere to strict rule of this sort in general horsemanship. It is just the same as regards seat: this must be more or less varied, in accordance with the circumstances under which the rider is placed. I must here again revert to the dragoon, for it is with him alone that fixed rule is adhered to. Every dragoon has the same kind of seat, and he can adhere to it, because each man rides the same horse — that is, a horse who, with a trifling difference as to smoothness or roughness of pace, goes like every other horse in the troop.

Those totally unacquainted with riding may very naturally imagine that the seat, once acquired be it of what sort it may, can be adhered to on any and every horse; it certainly may be t

some degree, but by no means with the same ease to the rider. It is thus even with troops; for though each horse goes nearly in the same way, there is a vast difference as to the ease with which it goes as regards the rider; for whoever has closely looked at a troop in a trot, must have seen some of the men sitting almost without motion on their seats, while others are tossed six inches from their saddles at each step the horse takes. Still that step falls very short, in point of difference, to that of ordinary broke horses: with the latter, provided he does it safe and moderately well, he is allowed to go as he likes, uniformity of step never being thought of, or called into requisition. In a charge it is the same thing; for though some horses are naturally more impetuous than others, troop horses learn by practice that they are expected to keep in rank with each other; and half of them would do so if they had no bridle on their heads, while horses used for general, or even particular, purposes vary much, in their habits, gait, and inclinations, and each requires, more or less, different management, and in many cases a different seat on the part of the rider.

I have heard persons remark that all jockeys have the same seat. This is to a certain degree correct, for their initiation into horsemanship is in most cases the same; namely, beginning by

riding racehorses at exercise; and these horses doing most of their exercise or work in company, get more into the same style of going than such as are used singly. Racehorses are all ridden, as far as circumstances and their tempers will permit, in the same manner, in the same sort of bridle, and, when going together, the pace is the same. Consequently, with the exception of some requiring being firmer held than others, and a firmer seat, and more watchfulness on the part of the boy, the seat can be pretty much the same. These lads are not permitted to ride as they may think proper, or in the way that they might at first find most easy or pleasant to themselves. Their stirrups are put to the proper length that is known to give them the firmest seat; their bridles knotted for them: so the boy has no choice as to where he might please to hold his hands. In the course of time and practice, what is proper becomes habitual and he would do that as the most easy to himself which at first he did from submission and instruction. All this, of course, gives a similarity of seat to racing riders; and what perhaps makes it appear more strongly, is that the seat of a jockey is most observed when he is singly giving his horse his canter before the race, or his usual gallop. On such occasions racehorses go pretty much in the same style; so if we saw two

jockeys pass us doing the same thing, the seat of most of them would be very similar, — that is to say, the seat of each would be a racing one, and such as would at once show the rider as one accustomed to ride racehorses. Some have certainly by far a more graceful seat than others, some sit more closely and firmer on their horse than others, and some have finer hands than others; still they all ride like jockeys. So far their seats are alike; but to show that their seat cannot be always the same, like that of the dragoon, even while doing the same thing, we will suppose four jockeys giving their horses, of different habits and tempers, their preliminary canter. We shall see here their seats all different, each being under different circumstances, though doing the same thing; for though the act is in itself the same, the way in which each horse does it, renders it very different as regards its effect on the jockey; and he is obliged to effect it in a different manner, in accordance with the temper, courage, and going of his horse.

The first man we see is raised slightly, and steadily, in his stirrups; his body bent gracefully over his horse; his head a little inclined to the near side; his hands well down; the back of his elbows near the centre of his body, and perfectly still, merely lightly steadying his horse's head and holding him together; his feet and legs in an easy

position, and steady as if nailed to his saddle-flap. About such, with a little variation, would be the seat of every jockey under the same circumstances. Now, if we look at the horse, we shall see why he can be thus ridden: he comes smoothly and gracefully along, going (in riding phrase,) "within himself," just the pace his rider wishes; his neck gracefully bent; his head in the right place, inclining to his near shoulder; his nose in, and his ears in that middle position that shows good temper, and absence of either alarm, impetuosity, or sluggishness. This horse is pulled up merely by a gentle pressure on the bit, which, bringing the body of the rider quietly into his seat, it is sufficient to effect, and with such a tempered horse would be a signal that the canter was length enough. He turns round and walks back cool and collected, looking placidly and good-humouredly around him; and on the jockey patting his neck, it is seen that horse and man are on good terms with each other.

We now see a rider coming along on a resolute leather-mouthed horse, "who is pulling double:" he comes with his head low, directly in a line with his body, and every now and then thrusting it out between his legs, with a force no arm could control. There is a determination in his eye, and a fixed, forward position of the ears that shows his pulling has quite as much o

temper as of any willing energy in it; for possibly, when really called on, he curs it at once.

On such a horse we see the jockey is neither standing in his stirrups, nor with his body thrown back in the seat, but in a middle way, so as to allow him to "give and take" with the horse, as his resolute temper may render necessary. His feet are fixed firmly in his stirrups, and thrown or rather held forward to give a stronger fulcrum to the body; his arms are pulled nearly straight. This causes him to keep his body in such a position that he can yield it forward when his horse gives one of those determined thrusts out of the head that such horses are very apt to do; for the reins being knotted, if the body was held stiff, the man would be pulled over his horse's head: and further, by occasionally lessening for an instant his pull at his horse, he makes a fresh impression on his dead mouth. No man could retain a neat or graceful seat on such a brute as the one I describe. We will now look at him pulling up. No gentle pressure will do here, no indication of the rider's wish would be attended to. We see the man throw his body back: this checks the horse, but does not pull him up. It is repeated perhaps again and again; and at last he is, as a sailor would say, "brought to;" and in truth, no bad term for pulling up such a reprobate. He comes back walking, *now*

sluggishly and doggedly along. You seldom see such a horse look about him, but would be found ready to salute anything within his reach with his heels. If he does look at a passer-by, it is with something of the amiable ken of an overdriven, half-infuriated bullock. We see the jockey stretch his fingers on his thighs, to get them suppled after being cramped by the mauling they have had; for persons who have only ridden ordinary horses have no conception how a thoroughly resolute racehorse can pull, — as our late friend Mr. Jessamy would say, "Can't they, though?" Nor is this to be wondered at, when we consider how little the mouths of racing colts are attended to; so, if disposed to pull, they are allowed to do so; and by constantly lugging at the boy at exercise, who, for such horses, is selected among the strongest in the stables, their mouths become insensible, and sheer force and management alone holds them,—and not always that either.

"Here comes a flyer; that's the woon for moy money," cries some whapstraw, seeing a third horse coming; and a flyer he appears to many just then. This is a bit of a puller too, but nothing like the other; and he does it in a different way. He comes "star-gazing" along, his nose out, and that flung from side to side in impatience of control, not from ill temper, but impetuosity of disposition and excitement. He gallops somewhat high, and

comes striding along in any thing but a straight line: from the manner in which he flings himself about, his ears in constant motion, sometimes forward, sometimes inclined the other way, as if catching each noise he hears before or behind him; his tail with its end turning upwards, he comes wildly along, and is only kept straight by the restraint of the bit, and that depending on the martingale not giving way; if it should, no living man could guide him.

His jockey we see quite down in his seat, his feet forwards, his body thrown back; the reins held as wide apart as the knot will permit, that each hand may be the better able to steady the head, that never allows the same hold of it to be retained for a minute. This horse is to be pulled up without much effort, for his mouth is not a dead one, and the martingale gives the bit a hold on the bars of the mouth; without it, the bit would only come against and up to the corner of the lips, and give no hold. Coming back, we see him too impatient to walk, but dancing about and half-starting at everything he sees. We see and hear his jockey trying to pacify him, but he is too excited to be cooled down. Probably we see symptoms of sweating—odds against the Flyer. I should say, "if a false start or two take place, a pony to a fiver he does not win."

Now comes quite a different gentleman, and

ridden quite in a different manner. He comes his up gallop at a rattling pace, because he can't help it; his ears close down on his poll, his tail switching, not from vice, for he is a good-tempered horse, but a lurching sluggish rogue: if he was induced to show any trick, it would probably be bolting somewhere, if not well watched, when the pace became too fast to please him.

His jockey we see sitting down in his saddle, his legs rather back, so as to be ready to give him a taste of the spur if necessary. He is kicking and twisting him along, and shaking him every stride; in short, "getting him on his legs," and trying to infuse some energy into him. He hugs the rails as if he was looking for some vacancy to bolt through. His jockey now threatens him; the rogue understands the hint, and finishes his distance straight and well. No difficulty in pulling up here: the moment his jockey stopped shaking him, his pace slackened, and the only care required is, that he may not stop too short.

He is now coming back. He walks lazily, as if the sun was too hot for him. His jockey kicks him along, and is obliged now and then to give him a twist and shake to keep him going. This is a kind of horse some jockeys are famous for riding. Old Sam Darling was one.

I trust, from the description I have given of four different jockeys riding as many different horses

it will be seen, that though the seat of each might very nearly resemble the other under the same circumstances, the seat must be varied when circumstances vary also; therefore, to become a horseman, it is absolutely necessary that a man must be put on different horses, to teach him how to act under different circumstances.

The chief variation in seat between the jockey and hunting rider consists in the latter riding with longer stirrup leathers, in proportion to his length of leg, than the jockey, which enables him to sit firmer in riding at fences; still, when galloping over fair ground, the nearer the hunting man approaches the seat of the jockey, the better will he look, and the more advantageous will it be to his horse.

Although the seat of hunting men varies much more than that of jockeys, and certainly by no means so unequivocally denotes their pursuit, still there is an ease and confidence evinced by the man accustomed to ride to hounds, that is not seen with the mere road and park rider. With the latter a walk, trot, canter, and perhaps a moderate short gallop, are the height of his exploits; but the man who has ridden all sorts of horses, over all sorts of country, and all descriptions of fences, acquires such perfect confidence in his seat, that, when riding in an ordinary way, he in fact sits any how; always, of course, like

a horseman, but with no appearance of taking trouble to either appear or act like one. He does both, because from habit he could not help doing so if he wished it; and it is this absence of all effort that shows the horseman and hunting man. He, like other men, uses his left as his bridle arm and hand; but nothing is more common than to see such men in a canter, or mere hand gallop, kicking their horse along with their rein in their right. Jockeys very commonly do this when on their hacks. If a man on a steady hunting-like horse is seen thus going up Rotten Row, ten to one he is a hunting man; a mere sitter on a horse would be afraid, if he did so, people would think he did not know how to ride; at least I never saw such men taking such liberties in riding; and if they did, simple as the thing in itself is, there would be a want of ease in their manner of doing it that would show it was imitation. There are certain peculiar habits that sit well on peculiar men, but would not do for every man; they would have as incongruous an appearance as a Newmarket-cut coat on a man with all the look and gait of a sailor.

In stronger elucidation of what I mean, I will give an instance: —There are few persons who ever visit the Parks who have not seen the Misses Reynolds riding there; the eldest in particular has an occasional habit of riding with her rein in

the right hand, and resting the left just below the hip. This looks well with her; it is an act indicative of the perfect ease of a most perfect horsewoman. But I was highly amused by one day seeing a lady, of an unmentionable age, riding a nondescript sort of galloway, and sitting on him as if she had never been on one before, and certainly would have looked to quite as much advantage had she been any where but on one then. This lady was aping the Reynolds' lounge, while her little brute shuffled along with her as if he was spancelled: it was the burlesque burlesqued. But I venture a hint, that though the Reynolds' lounge is extremely well in its place, there is nothing so peculiarly elegant in it as to call for imitation by the daughters of aristocracy; and some male friend will explain to them what I mean, when I say, that I consider with them it might be held as looking a *leetle* slangish.

All affectation of a particular style of riding on ordinary occasions, I must consider, should be avoided, for I hold it indicative of bad taste. Imitating the seat of a jockey on a racehorse would be absurd, — that of a huntsman equally so; and the affectation of a military seat in a man not a military character is only exceeded in absurdity by an Englishman in no way attached to the army sporting a moustache. With foreigners it is not

so: it is the custom of their country; and what is customary cannot be held to be absurd.

There is a medium kind of seat quite well adapted to road riding. This only requires the stirrup leathers a hole or two longer than the hunting man rides: indeed even they ride somewhat longer when taking a ride in walking costume, that is, trowsers and wellingtons, to what they do with top boots in the field; for in the latter situation most men ride as it is termed "home," that is, with the stirrup touching the front of the leg, or perhaps rather instep, and throw their bodies more on the seat; whereas lengthening the stirrup leathers gives something of a military air to the man, by throwing the body more on the fork, and thus more or less in accordance with the length the rider chooses to adopt. I am not prepared to say but that, with the most decided military seat, the man accustomed to it might sit the largest leap as firmly as the hunting man; therefore, for road riding the lengthened stirrup does not become objectionable as to giving a man a less firm seat; and indeed, I should for such riding recommend it, for appearance' sake only; for in most things there is a particular appearance becoming certain situations, and nothing looks worse than riding too short in trowsers.

I might be asked by the inexperienced rider,

he was quite wedded to the look of a military seat, why, if a man could sit firm at fences, thus riding, should he not ride hunting, adhering to the mode of sitting on his horse that he held as most becoming, when all that could be inferred from it (if he rode well) would be that he was a cavalry man hunting?

Before I presume to tell him why such a seat would be objectionable, I will give him what I consider proof that it would be so, by begging him to look at Captain Peel with his regiment on his charger, and Captain Peel in the field on Proceed: hide the features, we should not recognise the same person in the two situations. He could ride using any seat in any situation, and. as an acknowledged fine horseman, need not study the opinion of any man in riding matters; hence, if the military seat would do in the field, he need not alter it for that of the hunting man and amateur race-rider. The reader has, therefore, stronger authority than my word that a military seat would not do across country. I have ventured my opinion on the affectation and folly of a man assuming the appearance of being what he is *not*; and as assuming such appearance would really be disadvantageous to him in doing that which he means to do as what he *is*, it would render him quite deserving of having certain questions put to him which he might be at a loss to answer.

There can be no occasion for a person whose inclination or habits do not render hunting desirable pursuit assuming the characteristics of the hunting man, or attempting to contract his mode of sitting on his horse. I say attempting, for without practice in the field, he will never contract it. He has no occasion to do so; there is nothing peculiarly elegant in it; and any peculiarity in doing things, unless very well done shows a vast deal of the novice, a trifle of the simple, and very little of the gentleman.

We will now look to the chief reasons why the long stirrup leather will not do in the hunting field. With it a man cannot raise himself in his stirrups. This it is necessary to do during great part of a run, to ease both man and horse. It must not, however, be supposed, as perhaps it might be by a man who had never seen a chase ridden that in hunting a man is always thus riding; this is not the case, for a great part of a run must be rode sitting down in the saddle. On fair ground the close approach to the racing seat is the proper one; but in riding, we will say, over a common where old ant-hills rise a foot from the ground not perhaps two feet apart, a horse has to use his legs very handily to get along at, perhaps three parts' speed. He wants, so situated, all the liberty of his fore quarters that we can give; consequently, though, from those being the stronger

he derives advantage in a general way from the weight being thrown more on them than on his loins, here it would be against his free use of the former, to avoid such intricate and serious obstacles, and, if he did make a mistake, it would also be against his throwing himself up to rectify it; for the uninitiated in the features of the wild parts of the country must not suppose that ant-hills are the little fresh thrown up modicums of light earth seen in a meadow, but regular miniature tumuli, as hard as any part of the ground; and if hardly hit, would send a horse head over heels, risking him a broken back or broken neck. Any one who has ridden with the Queen's hounds from New Lodge, near Wingfield, over the common, can give a fair account of ant-hills.

There is another reason why, over such ground, a man should sit in his saddle. He wants all the hands nature and art have given him, and these he cannot use to the best advantage standing in his stirrups. He must be ready to give his horse support and assistance when necessary. This an arm held fixedly in one position could not do. He will find his horse occasionally strike short,—that is, put down his fore feet perhaps a yard short of his usual stroke or stride, and at another time extend his stroke as much beyond its usual length. This, on the place he is going, he is obliged to do to put his feet on level ground; the rider must

therefore give and take with him, to allow him to do this. When the horse strikes short, it is when he finds that his usual compass of stride would bring him on or against the obstacle, to avoid which he places his fore feet this side of it; when he stretches beyond his usual length, it is to stride over the object, and he places his feet beyond it. Now, supposing, on his striking short, to prevent his doing so the rider was to loosen his horse's head and in every way urge him, he would place his feet on the hillock, on this side its crown or summit; and, in such case, so great would be the tension on the back ligaments of the legs, that a most severe strain, or possibly break down, would be the consequence. And if, on the horse's extending his stroke to overstride the difficulty, the rider kept a fixed arm, instead of yielding to the pull he finds on his hands, the horse would most probably be forced to place his feet on the other and sloping side, and then a tumble would be all but inevitable. The horse, therefore, in such a case, must be allowed to pick his own way, which, if he knows his business, he will do safely. With an even stroke he could not go and he will judge better than his rider could tell him where to curtail and where to lengthen his stride.

It is pretty much the same in riding over meadows with numerous water drains in them

These are, perhaps, not more than eight or ten inches wide; but this is quite wide enough to admit a horse's foot; and they are quite deep enough to give him and his rider a regular "purler," when they do so. Here, therefore, the safest plan is also to sit down in the saddle and allow your horse to measure his distance himself. I have often felt my horse take certainly near or quite twenty feet at one of these, and his instinct told him when his safety from a fall depended on his doing so. For instance, we will suppose a horse extended and striding along sixteen or more feet in his stroke; he finds, if he put down his fore feet where they would come in accordance with his then common length of stroke, they would just come into the drain. He knows the consequence of this as well as his rider does, and to avoid it he makes a lengthened stride, a wide jump, in fact, and alights on the other side. This he could not do if stiffly held,—and playing roley-poley in this way is rather a dangerous pastime.

In using the (not) common term of *fixed* hold of a horse's head, I have so done that it may not be confounded with those usually made use of; namely, "firm," "fast," or "steady;" for a reader might with great propriety say that he has heard horsemen say, that in such or such a case a man should have a "firm hold of his horse's head," that he should "steady his head," or "keep

a steady hand on his horse." In going a gallop at exercise, for instance, when the pace was to be made stronger, a head lad might say to a boy, "Now, Tom, catch fast hold of your horse's head, and come along." These are all proper terms, and perfectly well understood by those accustomed to them; but firm, steady, or fast in no way means fixed. It is quite proper to keep a firm, or steady, or fast hold of a horse by his head at a fence, whichever term may be selected; but in such case, either only means such hold that, in accordance with his mouth, enables us to afford him support; and this hold should be kept steadily and uniformly, whether he brings his head in or in exertion puts it out,—still it is not fixed. This a man with a firm seat can retain by the extension or drawing back of his arms; so, in fact, by properly adapting the hold to the nature of the animal's mouth, his hand is at liberty, though it is steadily held and supported; but a fixed pull produces punishment instead of support, and the horse, in leaping, would probably jump short to avoid it.

CHAPTER IV.

DIFFERENT EFFECTS OF LEARNING TO RIDE WITH OR WITHOUT STIRRUPS. — THE KINDS OF HORSES BEST ADAPTED FOR ROAD-RIDING. — THE THOROUGH HACK. — THE GENERAL HACK. — THE TROTTING HACK. — THE COB. — THE FOREIGN HORSE. — THE AUTHOR'S "FANCY."

HAVING now ventured my ideas as to what, in general terms, constitutes the groundwork of horsemanship, we will consider who it is that is going to ride, the species of riding he will make use of, and the description of horse he intends or fancies for his use.

Of boys it would be useless to say much, and still more so to say much to them, for even in riding they would never voluntarily take instruction if they were permitted to ride without it; so, in cases where it is determined to make them horsemen, they must first be told, then obliged to do that which will enable them to become such, and be left to find out the effect of what they are made to do by after experience.

There are, however, two modes of teaching boys to sit firm on their horse; and as each have a different effect, I will mention them: the one

teaches the boy to trust to his hold on his saddle by his knees and thighs; this is learnt by his riding for some time without stirrups. In personal illustration of this, I rode the whole of one season and the first half of another with fox-hounds without stirrups, and that part of my second season on full-sized horses. The advantage of this mode of instruction is, that it teaches, or in fact obliges, a boy to balance his body, and sit still and firm in his seat, without any other aid than nature has supplied him with; and it obliges him to keep his legs motionless; for should he hold so loosely by his knees and thighs as to allow his legs to move or swing backwards and forwards on his saddle skirts, they would allow him to roll over the one or other side of his horse, and thus "the hope of the family" might be turned topsy-turvy. The next advantage derived from this plan is, it finally, in riding terms, gives a lad hands; for so soon as he has learned a firm seat, and got in full confidence in this respect, his hands are as free and as much at liberty as if standing on the ground. For however firm he may want to hold his horse by the head, to assist, support, or check him, he wants no hold by his own hand as a support or stay to his own body. I will mention an anecdote in proof of this; where this independence of hand, that is, feeling independent of them, sold a very bad horse at a very good price.

My father, one day hunting, saw a dealer on a very clever-looking mare. They had but a short run; but during that, my father was quite fascinated by the uncommon cleverness of this mare at all sorts of fences, particularly at timber, or, in more common terms, gates (which those who have hunted in the Hatfield part of Hertfordshire are aware are of frequent recurrence). He bought her, cheap as he thought, at eighty. He rode her a few times, and found her but a very soso one when hounds really went; in fact, though a fine and strong-looking mare, she was a weak one. So, thinking seven stone would suit her better than twelve, she was turned over to me. With this weight she could go, as the song in the Quaker goes, "The first in the throng" *for a time;* but even with my light weight she would at times all but shut up; in short, had no game in her. Yet (and I have found this peculiarity in other horses) when a good deal beat, she would jump as safely as when fresh; in fact, she never made a mistake at anything.

An elderly gentleman in the neighbourhood, who was a timid, though good horseman, had for some time cast an eye on this mare when hunting, and had sounded me as to whether she was to be parted with; for, seeing his hankering after her, many an unnecessary gate had I popped her over to captivate him. He called to see her, and before

asking her price, with many apologies asked if he might see her over a fence or two when not excited by hounds. As a boy, I wanted no better fun than thus obliging him, so I took a little ring round him, and of course she fenced beautifully. A gate led into the field where the old gentleman sat, and a flight of hurdles crossed the next close by. I was determined to fix him, not by a coûp de main, but by a contre-coûp, showing what she could do without the aid of hands. She was coming along at a beautiful canter, playing with a snaffle bit. I threw the rein on her neck. She took the hurdles light as a cork, and easy to the rider as if sitting in a chair. I put her head to the gate, threw down my rein, and she topped it like a deer.

"What does your father ask for her, young gentleman?"

"A hundred and fifty guineas."

"I will give it."

Whether the old gentleman had any nostrum, in the shape of strengthening powders, that he administered to her, or whether he gave her milder doses of going mixture than we had done, is not to the purpose; but though he rode her full thirteen stone, I saw her carry him two seasons as well and fast as he ever went; and she was a great favourite, — so all parties were pleased.

I mention this to show that a firm seat is easily

to be acquired without the vile habit of "holding on by the bridle;" which, if once contracted, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to break a man of; and until that was done, he never could be half a horseman.

If during the last page or two, or for the next, I write or quote personally, I do so to show that I write from personal practice, and not from mere observation or theory.

I in no shape mean to infer that continuing to ride without stirrups would be advantageous; on the contrary, I am clear it would have quite an opposite effect. It is very well, and I hold it as very advantageous as a groundwork for beginners; but the artist will require other aids to perfect his work. One of these is the stirrup. Had I gone on riding two or three more seasons without them, the consequence would probably have been, that from practice I should have become so accustomed to ride without them, that I should have been unable to avail myself of their assistance; and though, on any thing that is not as slippery as a saddle, a man might sit an unruly horse quite as firmly without stirrups as with, still without their aid he could not ride for ordinary purposes to the best advantage, or make the most of his horse without their use.

An Arab may ride bare-backed, sit firmly, and do something like twenty miles within the hour,

on the desert. But he does it in a wild way; and his horse, ridden by an English jockey, would, I am quite certain, do it to greater advantage, that is, with less fatigue. His doing it, ridden as he is, is nothing to the purpose; it is whether he could not, by being more scientifically managed and ridden, do it either in shorter time, or in the same time with more ease.

Racing, or rather exercise riding, boys learn to ride in the directly opposite way. They are never allowed to ride even walking exercise without a saddle and stirrups; they therefore learn to depend on them; in short, with their comparatively little strength, they could not ride the horses they do if they did not. For in very free-going horses and hard pullers, by keeping their feet forward, the stirrup acts with them as the toe-board does to a coachman with four horses in hand; and if we were to select from the best riding boys in all the stables at Newmarket, we should not find one who could, like the dealer's lad, jump on a horse and ride him bare-backed; at all events, he could not ride him well; and indeed I should say the chances are he would tumble off. So much for learning in one way only. Now the dealer's lad could not ride a racehorse as well as the other, but he could ride him; and when merely following a head lad, probably, he would ride him tolerably well, for he is accustomed to ride both with and

without stirrups, and is indifferent as to which; and in point of lightness of hand, and making the most of a good or bad mouth, the dealer's lad beats the Newmarket one hollow. This arises from his being taught and expected to make every horse he gets on go as well, and carry himself as handsomely, as he can be made to do; and as he rides a dozen or more different horses every day, he acquires a hand for every horse. The Newmarket boy rides the same horse for months together, and probably not more than half a dozen different ones in as many years. This is therefore by no means the best place to learn hands, though a very good one to teach him to hold strong pullers, which he can do better than the dealer's lad, though he may be physically far stronger.

The remark might very naturally be made, that if, as I have said, a jockey requires good hands for all sorts of horses, and that riding exercise is not the best school to give such, it must be a bad one to select a jockey from, which I have stated is mostly done.

I will endeavour to reconcile this seeming incongruity. Exercise boys have *not*, generally speaking, fine hands; therefore, to a certain degree, it is objectionable as a school for a jockey. But to set against this, in the first place, there is no other in which the other requisites in a jockey

can be taught, or of course learnt; for training stables are the only places where a boy can become acquainted with the habits, tempers, style of going, and powers of speed of the racehorse; and, what is of quite as much consequence as all these put together, it is the best school to enable him to become a good judge of pace. Without these acquirements no man can ever be a jockey.

Having thus far answered the supposed remark, I hope it will be borne in mind, that, although I said jockeys have mostly been exercise boys, I in no way even inferred that exercise boys mostly become jockeys; for the fact is, there is not one in a dozen of these boys that has either head or hands for the purpose; and it is because a boy is found to possess these in greater perfection than other boys in the same stables that gets him first put upon a racehorse as a jockey.

I have now laid before my reader what I conceive to be the different effects of learning to ride without and with stirrups, and of learning to ride with them *only;* and, whether man or boy, I should most strongly recommend the beginner to adopt the former course, satisfied as I am that for general riding it will give both the best seat and best hands.

There are three descriptions of persons among men grown, who, if they mean to make riding a

pursuit, would benefit by some advice on the subject: the one is the man who has never ridden at all; the other one who has ridden a little, and, finding himself in difficulty, is satisfied he knows nothing about it; the third is one who has ridden a good deal, and that very badly. The first would be altogether the readiest pupil, and very likely would, in the shortest time, become a horseman. He will do as he is advised, because he has no inducement to do, nor does he know how to do, otherwise; and, beginning right, the right way will become his most natural habit, and of course the one the easiest to him; and having in commencing no habits at all, he will have no bad ones to correct.

The next would give a little more trouble; for as he has ridden, whether it may have been twenty times or two hundred, he must have ridden *somehow;* and though a horseman might very properly consider this as riding *nohow*, it will depend upon the turn of the rider's mind how far it may or may not be found difficult to convince him it was so. But, as I have said, he must have ridden somehow, and that with him has become a habit; therefore, supposing he is diffident enough to be convinced his habits have been bad ones, he has to forget, or at least to forego, those while he learns proper ones, the former probably being by far the most difficult task. "*Facilis*

descensus, sed revocare gradum," *&c. &c.*, might be in this case applicable to his situation; but if he should not attend to the "*revocare gradum*," and from not doing so, get a purler from his horse on the flagstone, the "*facilis descensus*" might not be so appropriate to his then situation.

With the third, who has ridden a great deal, but ridden badly, I wish to have nothing to do. He will, no doubt, consider he knows quite as much as I do; and as I am not prepared to say he does not, I will not enter the lists with him at all.

We will therefore conclude the person who cons over these pages to be one who thinks the author able to be of use to him, in giving hints which he is disposed to adopt and put in practice.

Having asked the question as to what kind of riding would be his object, and being told that that object was air, exercise, and amusement, — or, in other terms, road riding, — he will perhaps take my advice as to the style of seat and manner of riding for this purpose. This advice will be to use that medium style that will give him, when on horseback, the same advantage that I give him credit for possessing when on foot — namely, the appearance of a gentleman; and to this a style and demeanour devoid of affectation, but in good taste, greatly contributes.

This settled, we will suppose he has inquired

the kind of horse best suited to his purpose. Of these there are several kinds, all equally gentlemanly, and all adapted to the same purpose; their difference in appearance and qualifications only being a matter of consideration as regards the fancy of the purchaser as to the one, and the pace he holds the most agreeable to him as to the latter.

I shall use the term hack in speaking of these horses, not as indicative of any inferiority, but as one applicable to saddle horses used only for road purposes.

There is, then, the thorough (or nearly so) bred cantering and galloping hack; and very pleasant horses such are to men who study their ease either in going a moderate or fast pace. In either such a horse's pace is smooth and easy; and although, from his going neatly, lightly, and within himself (if nicely held), he does not appear to be going fast, his racing-like sweep of his haunches brings them so well under him, and puts his fore legs so well before him, that he covers more ground at each stroke than persons would suppose, and gets over it much faster than he appears to be doing, which would be soon seen by cantering a lower bred horse by his side. The latter, seen going by himself, would appear to be going the fastest; but bring him side by side with the other, it would soon be seen he lost ground every time

his feet came to it. If wanted to keep pace with the other, he would appear to be scuttling along welve miles an hour, while the other would only seem to be going eight, though both went the same pace, whatever that pace might be. The great advantage of a horse going in this deceptive way as to pace is, that if a man wants to go fast along the road, such horses will do it with ease to themselves and rider, without subjecting him to the truly vulgar, I may say butcher-like, appearance of pelting along a high road; and should any fair treasure be hid in some ivy-covered bijou of a cottage in the neighbourhood of Fulham, the little thorough-bred will glide over the four miles in twenty minutes, appearing to be only going a park canter; occasionally a recommendation, but of course, in these moral times, only to bachelors.

Although doubtless the inhabitant of the bijou possesses every perfection, I must apprise the rider that he must not expect the same thing in the thorough-bred, for these galloping hacks are not usually anything to boast of in their trot; safe they very likely may be, and may do that pace moderately well, — that is, well enough to render an occasional change of pace agreeable to both man and horse; but this is as much as must be expected; so now the rider may judge how he would like a galloping hack.

Next comes the more general hack, that is,

general as to paces; he is not so highly bred, but perfectly a gentleman's horse. His paces both in trot and canter are good, and he does them, we will say, handsomely and easily; and on such a hack, by trotting one mile and cantering the next, the ground is to be got over like a gentleman, "and all without hurry or care." But he cannot slip along like the sly-going bit of blood, nor is he a trotter either; he is like many men,—no brilliant, but a safe, gentlemanly, and pleasant companion, and, as such, a desirable acquaintance.

Now we come to the trotting hack. These are of different degrees of breeding, not often very highly bred. I do not pretend to criticise the taste of others by the standard of my own, but I confess that I think riding a trotter at his fast pace in the public neighbourhood of London has something of Whitechapel in its appearance; and to perpetrate such a thing in the Park, when full, would induce me to set down the man who did it as an inferior horse-dealer, and the doing it the height of vulgarity.

I mean no disrespect by this to men who are fond of trotters, or to the trotters themselves. Of the latter I have had many, but I used them chiefly for harness; and for such use I would not own a horse that was not fast; nor do I in any way object to a trotter to ride. They get along the road wonderfully fast; but to call their qualifi-

cations into use, I should say the country is their place. As road saddle hacks, these or galloping ones are equally good as to going a fast pace; for let any man try an ordinary fair-going horse in a gallop, by the side of a trotter, and he will be surprised to find he must keep his horse at fully three quarters' speed, for the real trotter is as deceptive as to the rate at which he is going as is the racing-going galloper; for fast trotters, though they may not appear to be doing so, clear an astonishing length of ground between the periods of putting their feet to it. I do not mean by a trotter the mere quick stepper, but the one that puts his foot well before him, stepping just as quickly as the other, but covering as much ground in two steps or strokes as the other does in three; they, therefore, like the real galloping one, afford the advantage of clearing ground at the rate of twelve or fourteen miles an hour, while they only seem going at a pace that does not make the rider conspicuous.

I believe I have, in some other book or article, mentioned an instance corroborative of the deceptive pace of some fast trotters in one I had. He had been objected to by more than one master, from having got them into several scrapes in the crowded neighbourhood of London, from the following cause. He threw himself, without appearing to do so, such an extraordinary distance

each stroke he took, that unless a man knew his peculiarity, and was very careful, he was upon any object he followed before his driver was aware. Thus, supposing a passenger to be crossing a street at such a distance in advance as would have rendered his situation perfectly safe with most horses, this horse was upon him before he could get out of the way; and it was the same with respect to coming up to other vehicles. This will be easily explained to, or understood by, persons who are aware how much sooner a train on a railroad reaches and leaves an object than could be supposed to be the case; taking, therefore, the *pour* and *contre* into consideration, the reader can decide how far he would like a trotter.

I must not, however, omit to mention a peculiarity that most really fast trotters have, and which to many persons would render them objectionable. They are apt to pull strong at the rider or driver, and the faster they go, the harder they pull; in truth, many of them pull awfully. Some few do not; for instance, the black mare that I bought for, and sent to the late Duke of Gordon, and who beat the famous Birmingham mare, while the former was in his grace's possession: she had a beautiful mouth in any pace, but such instances are not common.

The cob is, we will say, the next votary for the reader's favour. The term has been so hacknied

of late years, that we can only judge of what we may expect to see by the man who mentions the animal. A cob, in its true definition, means a gentlemanly, pleasant roadster, with considerable strength, but low in stature, varying from (I shall say) thirteen hands three inches to at most fourteen and a half. The others below or above this standard are strong galloways, or strong low horses; but we constantly see a cob advertised fifteen hands and a half, and a galloway of thirteen hands elevated to a cob.

The advantage of using a cob of, we will say, fourteen hands and an inch high, is greater to a heavy weight than to other persons. Such horses are easy of access, are stronger than taller horses, unless the strength of the latter increases in proportion to his height, and then such horses are difficult to find with light action, and are of course less convenient to mount. The cob, if he is worthy the name, steps quick, lightly, and pleasantly, the shortness of his legs making him cover less ground than the full-sized horse; so, to enable the cob to keep up the same pace as the other, he has no resource but to step more quickly, and by so doing, for road work, more safely. But, to be gentlemanly, he must be very handsome, and as light in hand, light in step, and handy as a pony. A coarse-looking cob subjects a man to the appearance of riding an animal that would have been a cart horse, had his size fitted him for such work.

If the reader has a predilection for a cob, and means to ride one, he must not found such intention on any idea that by so doing he will get a pleasant, safe, and gentlemanly looking animal at a low price; for if a cob is fit for a gentleman to ride, he will find he will have to give as strong a price for him as has been given for most of the very fine horses he may see ridden in the Park. Really nice cobs are worth a large sum of money; that is, they will bring such a sum as I would not give for the best cob that ever stept on iron; but as better judges of horses than myself do, we may say the cob is worth it.

A person, some few months since, showed me one he had just bought, and I was informed of the price, something over a hundred. I can only say, had I been buying cobs for friends, I should have expected to get about two and a half of such as him for the money given. The owner had not ridden his purchase half a dozen times, before some nobleman fell in love with the animal, and purchased him at a considerably advanced figure, — "bravo, fancy!" There is nothing therefore ill judged, nor is there any thing unhorseman-like, in a man purchasing and riding a clever cob, if he prefers him to a higher bred animal. I do not, never did, and, I think I may safely say, never shall; but this is so perfectly a matter of taste, that I should not attempt to give any advice

on the subject; in fact, it is a case where none is wanting.

If, however, a man wants not only to be carried pleasantly, but fast, and that for long distances, and wishes to do this on a cob, he must look for a *rara avis*, — and, as we learned in Syntax, "*nigroque simillima cygno;*" not that being black would make the cob the more likely to do this, but quite the reverse, for in a general way the blacker the cob the coarser the breed. If, however, he does what he does do well, pleasantly, and handsomely, and does it fast enough to meet the wishes of the purchaser, let him be bought by all means, though, as Emilia styled Othello, he be "the blacker devil."

I have another style of horse to offer to the reader's notice; (and, after giving a characteristic sketch of each, leave it to his discretion how far any of them will be likely to answer his purpose:) this is the foreign horse.

Many of the above breed are very beautiful animals, and good enough for ordinary road riding, that is, if they are only wanted for pleasure riding, though they would look a little askew at such a day's road riding as a dealer or a jockey would occasionally give them.

We will first introduce the Arab, both as a perfectly gentlemanly horse, and as the one capable of beating the whole lot of other foreigners, where

speed combined with game and stamina is called for. Some of these are doubtless very extraordinary horses, when of a high caste and in their own country, though we have never found them equal ours in this; no disparagement whatever to a horse accustomed to and brought from a diametrically different climate.

Had the challenge recently made between English and foreign horses to run in Egypt come off, even if they had beaten us, it would not have altered my opinion of our horses, taking into consideration the enervating influence of climate on them, more than it would that of an English, Scotch, and Irish labourer, if the three were beat in a day's work in Demerara by three Negroes. If we had run even with the Arabs, it would have shown our horses superior, being able to do so under great disadvantage; if we had beaten, the most decided superiority of our horses must have been for ever admitted. The only really fair thing would have been to run the same horses (let it have come off as it might) both in Egypt and at Newmarket.

We shall not, however, as a road horse, want such an Arab as any of those we may suppose will be brought out against ours; for if we did, we should not have to calculate by tens in our purchase, but hundreds; and, in fact, when a man fancies he has purchased a high bred one, in nine

cases in ten, if the truth could be found out, the horse is no Arab at all. He is a foreign horse, and of Eastern breed; but if the reader could at all decide by looks from what part of the eastern hemisphere the horse came, I could not, and should in this particular be about as good a judge of him as of an ostrich.

Most Englishmen annex the idea and expectation of high showy action to a foreign horse. This is, however, by no means a characteristic attribute of the Arab: they mostly go near the ground, and are not at all remarkable for being safe in a slow pace; and if a man flatters himself he has got an Arab with fine action, the chances are he has been deceived, though not to his disadvantage; for if he has got the action, but not the Arab, he is much better off than if he had got the Arab, but not the action; and if the horse looks like one, it is quite enough for common purposes of riding.

The Hanoverian I cannot permit my reader to ride; not but that many of them are very handsome, and perhaps good enough for his use, but their action is so peculiar, that it carries with it a good deal of Mr. Batty and the circle, when such horses are used under the saddle. When large and picked horses, they are magnificent show harness horses, but of course unfit to ride; and if even of a proper size for the latter purpose, though their action is grand, it wants elegance.

There is another foreign horse, not often brought into this country, that though I would not be seen upon, there is no reason why the reader should not, if he does not object to a little ostensibility. This is the real Spanish jennet. Some of these are very pretty, gentlemanly little nags, and very graceful in their movements. They are, moreover, mostly particularly safe and easy as to motion, have usually good mouths, and carry their heads in a good place. They may perhaps be more of toys than serviceable animals, but, if handsome, are gentlemanly toys. I grant a man on one of them might not be taken for a hunting man, and very probably would be taken for a foreigner; no harm in that. There is no absolute merit in being the first, and certainly not the slightest disgrace in being taken for the other; a taste therefore that has nothing really objectionable or in any way ungentlemanly in it may fairly be indulged in, if such happens to be that of the reader.

Some very fair hacknies are to be found among French horses, and closely resembling our own in appearance; and I think, from being accustomed to go on rough pavement, they are usually safe goers. It would therefore be mere prejudice to refuse such a horse because he was French; for those who hold such to be necessarily bad horses, do not know them. They are, on the contrary, very enduring, and many can go fast

enough for any ordinary use; in fact, they are very often good and pleasant hacks.

The reader has now before him different sorts of road horses to select from, any of which, if well chosen, will answer his purpose. Should he, however, know so little, or think he knows so little, as to ask what I would recommend, I will tell him the sort that, take them all in all for general road riding, I have found answer the best, and have fancied, taking them also all in all for a middle weight, the most pleasant and gentlemanly in appearance. Let it, however, be understood, that I have had horses of very different sorts in use at the same time; and, in specifying the one of my choice, it is chiefly for the reader who means to keep but one saddle horse for road purposes.

I would fix the standard for such a horse at fifteen hands; certainly not more. The more breeding he has the better, with as much strength as can be got without bordering on coarseness. He should be particularly neat and pretty; handsome is a term I should use to large horses. He should be long in proportion to his height, that length made out by the distance from the back of the wither to the bosom, and from the hip bone to the extremity of the haunch. This gives strength, propelling power, and freedom of action. His step should be light, as if he was stepping on hot iron; perfectly quiet and placid, yet so free, that

a motion of the leg, or a sound from the mouth, is enough to set him going. He should take to the trot or canter at once, on the proper indication from the rider; have a light, delicate mouth; and be so handy, that the rider, with his reins in one hand only, could by a turn of the wrist, or the pressure of a finger, twist and turn him in any direction. In his walk, he must step fast and gracefully. His canter should be elegance itself. And if with these he can trot handsomely at the rate of a dozen miles an hour, it is fast enough; and on such a horse I consider a man is carried like a gentleman on the road.

CHAPTER V.

HORSE EQUIPMENT.—THE BIT.—ADVANTAGE OF THE DOUBLE BRIDLE. THE PELHAM.—LEVERAGE IN BITS.—EFFICIENCY OF THE PELHAM ELUCIDATED.—THE SINGLE-REINED CURB, OR "THE HARD AND SHARP."—THE SNAFFLE.—ITS SUFFICIENCY FOR THE ROAD-HORSE.—CAUSES OF A BAD MOUTH.—INSUFFICIENCY OF THE SNAFFLE FOR FOX-HUNTING.—HOW TO REMEDY A BAD MOUTH.—THE DOUBLE BRIDLE RECOMMENDED.

We must now look to the kind of horse equipment to be used; for as it is quite necessary a man must get that as well as a horse before he rides, so it is necessary this should be judiciously chosen, to evince a uniformity of good taste and good judgment.

As so much of the comfort, and indeed safety, of the rider depends on a proper selection of bit for his horse, I will mention those mostly proper for road riding with a horse of ordinary good mouth.

The first I shall mention is, I fearlessly pronounce, the best for the generality of horses, in whatever way they may be used; namely, the

double bridle, that is, a curb bit and snaffle, or, in other terms, bridoon; this plain or twisted, as may be required. Any objection to them, on the score of weight or incumbrance to the horse, is futile; for if made of good stuff, the weight of the heaviest of the two would only be a few ounces; and if made light, the difference of bulk in the mouth is all ideal; and a large heavy bit of any sort is clumsy and ungentlemanlike in appearance, and of no efficacy as to utility.

Let the reader purchase no bit of any sort for his own use, but, in trade phrase, a "case-hardened" one. In the first place, such are always of good material; and other bits, however good or painstaking may be the groom, cannot be kept to that polish a gentleman's bridle should show. A common iron one will answer the purpose of holding a horse, but the difference of appearance between the two will be something like the lustre of a court dress' steel buttons and the leaden look of a kitchen carving knife; and iron being, in comparison with steel, a soft material, its bulk must be increased to prevent its bending.

Independent of the double bridle, made, as occasion may require, more or less severe, suiting all sorts of mouths, it also, in point of appearance, suits all sorts of horses, from the galloping thorough-bred to the Spanish jennet; it never looks out of place on any horse.

Next as a double bridle comes the Pelham. This is a bit not so much in use as I think it deserves to be, and its efficacy is less understood, even by good judges of other things in the horse way, than might be supposed. It is neither more or less than an ordinary snaffle with an elongated lower branch, to which is put a ring for a second rein; and to the top of its upper branch is affixed a curb chain. And this sort of bit may be made so as just to suit a horse that is not quite what may be wished in a snaffle, and yet does not want an ordinary curb bit; or it may be made into a most powerful engine, that few horses can withstand.

"*Faute d'autres choses*," or, perhaps, in better words, in place of higher attainments, I have devoted a good deal of time to various mechanical pursuits—and have quite satisfied more than one practical man that in one particular in the formation of bits they were in error. For instance, we will say a person has been riding his horse with a curb bridle of moderate dimensions, which is three inches and three quarters in the lower branch, and two and about a quarter in the upper. He finds he cannot hold his horse with this, and goes to a bit-maker and represents his case. Another is made full six inches below, and three inches and a half above the mouth; an awful machine to look at for a saddle horse. "There, Sir, that

will hold him, I warrant," says the artisan: but it will not, as the rider will find on trial,—for the mistakes made in its proportions are fatal to its effect.

I believe I am correct in saying that it is a principle in mechanics, that the longer the lever the greater its purchase and force. The bit-maker was quite right in lengthening the lever (which the lower branch of a bit is) below; and had he only done this, the bit would have become more severe. But he lengthened it also above, doing which he certainly made a larger bit, but diminished the effect of the lever; for lengthening the upper branch only made the curb chain act higher up the hind part of the jaw; and, to make that purchase equivalent to the former bit, a longer lever in proportion below was necessary. Now, had he diminished the height above from two and a quarter inches to less than two, and added two to the lever below, the horse's mouth, if properly curbed, would have been in all but a vice.

We may laugh at the ancients as long as we please, but they knew what was what with horses, as well as many other things, though they did those things in a different way. They rode great coarse horses, doubtless, with coarse mouths. Let us look at their bits for such animals. We may see them represented as not having more than an inch and a half of bit above the mouthpiece, with

an enormous branch below, thus producing a lever that would, like a dentist's key instrument, break a jaw if properly handled; — it is just the same, *mutatis mutandis*, with bits.

Any female may convince herself of the effect of the lower lever as acting with the upper part of a bit, by trying to cut a piece of wire ribbon with her scissors. She tries to do so near their points; finds she can make no impression: tries it lower down; makes a notch in the wire, but cannot get through it. She then places the wire as near the rivet of the scissors as possible, and cuts it in two easily with the scissors. The blades are like the part of the bit above the mouthpiece, the rivet the fulcrum, as is the mouthpiece and the horse's mouth; the shanks of the scissors are the lower branches of the bit; and both instruments act upon the same principle, — the one on the wire, the other on the mouth of the horse.

There is an old idea, still extant with many, that by making the upper branch of a bit short, we cause the lower to draw under the chin; so we should if, with a bit an inch and a half long above the mouthpiece, we left the curb chain the same length as if the upper branch was an inch longer; but take up the curb chain a couple of links, it would no more draw under than the other. And to carry this on, if we only left an inch above, and pulled the lower branch towards the horse's

nostrils, and then curbed him up, the curb chain would still keep the bit nearly perpendicular with the cleft of the mouth or lips.

To return to Pelhams, to which what I have said applies just as much as to ordinary curbs. I will give an instance of their efficacy.

I believe I have somewhere before mentioned a horse I once bought, who had been sold and resold because he could not be held with hounds, though perfectly tractable, and even light in the mouth, at other times. He had been ridden by more than one nobleman, several gentlemen, horse-breakers, huntsmen, and whips, and had gone away with them all. I bought him. He had been ridden with every instrument of force that could be put in a horse's mouth in the shape of a bit, had been tortured by whipcord round his tongue, and vexed in every way. I determined to try a non-irritative plan with him, and got an enormous Pelham made for him, of immense lever below, but only a couple of inches, or less, above; curbed him up very short; and, till I found it was wanted, rode him on the snaffle, which a Pelham is till the curb rein is used. This did not make him angry; and when I found it necessary to have recourse to the curb rein, he yielded to it at once. And I found I could with this bit hold a horse that had had curb chains made expressly for him, as he had snapped ordinary ones innumerable. I

never tried him with a regular curb bit, made in the same proportion as to length of branch below and shortness above, — so whether it would have had as much effect I do not know; nor do I venture to decide why the Pelham acted so forcibly, but so it was; and in another hard puller I tried the same sort of bit, and found it answer the same purpose.

It has been objected to Pelhams, that they make horses go heavy in hand. I doubt not but such would be the case with a rider who had bad hands; for in an ordinary way, a Pelham is a less severe curb bit, and a horse might soon be taught to lean on them. This is, however, not the fault of the bit, but the hands; for however severe the bit may be, if a horse's mouth is deadened by lugging at it, he would lean and bear on that, though he might not be able to face it at first starting.

The Pelham is no more incumbrance in a horse's mouth than what in that respect it directly is, a snaffle, with the advantage of its being also, by taking a second rein, a mild or strong curb bit, in accordance with how it is proportioned. I must therefore hold it a useful bridle.

We now come to the single-reined curb, that is, the "hard and sharp," a great favourite with many persons. I never use one; I dislike them upon this principle,—if a horse's mouth is so incorrigibly dead and heavy, that he cannot at times

be ridden on the snaffle, he is not fit to be ridden at all, at least not by a gentleman; and further, if it is dead, constantly resting on the curb bridle will very shortly make it more so; and if his mouth is good, why try to make it otherwise, by always using it to the pressure of a curb? With very fine and light hands, a horse may certainly be ridden with such a bridle without injury to his mouth; and as I see so many persons use such, I suppose I must conclude that fine hands are more common than I ever thought they were, or certainly ever saw samples of.

Of "hard and sharps," I should say the jointed, or, as they were at first called, the Turkish bit, is the best. This has two joints in the mouth-piece, with a port, and decidedly, from varying the pressure on the horse's mouth, does not deaden it like the common curb bridle, when used singly. There is moreover more meaning in its appearance; it is a direct hack's bridle. The other looks as if your man had taken it apart and forgot to put it together again, or had started you with one part keeping the other at home while he cleaned it, or to ride some other horse with, from wanting a proper exercise bridle. I do not hesitate in proclaiming a single-reined curb an unsportsman-like, bad bridle, let who will use it.

We now come to, perhaps, the most original of all bits, the snaffle. Of these there are various

kinds, — the plain, the easy and sharp twisted, the roller, the port-mouthed, the double-mouthed, and the ring snaffle. Of all these, the plain and the twisted are the only two generally useful ones. Formerly all hunting men used snaffles, and every horse called a hunter was rode with one, whether he carried his nose and head like the arm of a direction post, or like a pig hunting for beech-mast. They were then made uncommonly wide in the mouthpiece, to enable the rider (in the then used phrase) to saw his horse's mouth; a pretty clear indication that, though our worthy ancestors rode all horses in snaffle bridles, they did not ride all snaffle bridle horses. What a treat it must be to ride a brute whose mouth would bear *sawing*, and even require a lengthened space for that purpose!

I am quite of opinion that most horses could be so broken, or, in better phrase, "so mouthed," in the breaking, as to render them quite snaffle bridle horses for road purposes, if we could also ensure good hands to those who would ride them. In proof of this, most amphitheatrical horses will perform all their intricate evolutions in a snaffle, if the rider is as well broken as the horse.

We very rarely see a road horse in a snaffle bridle. Now, with submission to the opinion of the better informed, my own is, that the road horse is precisely the one for whom the snaffle is

sufficient, and I will state my reasons for thinking so. We only want him to walk, trot, canter, and very rarely gallop. Speaking of him as a pleasure horse, his business is little more than fair exercise; consequently we have a right to expect him to do this without trouble to ourselves, or requiring support at our hands. There is, therefore, no excuse for him if he bears unpleasantly on our hands, unless those hands, from being bad ones, induce him to do so. Thus there is no reason why he should not do his business in a snaffle as handily as the horse on the stage or in the circle; and, unquestionably, so he would, if properly mouthed, and afterwards properly ridden. The reason why we all but invariably see a hack with a curb bit in his mouth is not a flattering one to men as riders, but nevertheless the truth. Out of the hundreds that ride on the road, we seldom see a man with anything bordering on good hands. The consequence of which is, that however well mouthed a colt may be (or, I should more properly say, might be), his mouth shortly gets hardened and spoiled by rude hands; and then the curb bit is called into requisition, and, if used by the same hands, the mouth becomes as dead in that as in any other bridle.

There are certainly some horses that it is impossible to bring to as fine mouths as others,

and some with whom it is a matter of great difficulty to restore a mouth to sensibility that has been deadened by bad hands and severe bits. I have, however, never yet found a horse with a mouth so determinately dead and insensible to the bit, that, after a few times riding, I could not bring to go with tolerable comfort to myself by some contrivance or other.

The perfect tyro will perhaps be somewhat surprised when I tell him that the shape and make of the horse are, in very many instances, the original circumstances that have produced a bad mouth. He may say that make can have nothing to do with tenderness, liveliness, or hardness of mouth. Nor did I say it had; for a horse made in one way has, originally probably, the same sort of mouth as the horse made in any other. But shape, though not the original cause of a bad mouth, may be the circumstance that has led to the production of one. For instance—

There are some horses so peculiarly formed about the neck, that they have little more pliability in it than a pig. Yet is this horse wanted, and by some expected, to carry his head in as good a place, or nearly so, as the finer-made one. To make him do this, or rather in the attempt to make him do it, his mouth is tortured and bored at till it becomes as hard as the hand of a blacksmith or bricklayer's labourer. Any judge of horses would see whereabouts nature had intended

and enabled the animal to carry his head and neck, and would not attempt to make him do that which it was impossible he could do; and by allowing him to carry it in such place, the animal's mouth would, perhaps, be as pleasant as that of any other horse. He cannot yield his head handsomely, but he would do so as far as nature permitted him, and might be very pleasant and safe to ride, though carrying himself anything but handsomely. Such a horse is certainly not fit for a gentleman's hack, good, safe, and pleasant though he might be. He should, therefore, never be put to such a purpose; to attempt to alter him is useless and cruel,—for it is punishing an unfortunate beast for the fault or whim of nature. Any judge, seeing a horse thus made, would say, "ten to one he has a bad mouth;" and ten to one he would be right; for whatever the mouth might have been by nature, it is more than ten to one it has been rendered a bad one by man.

A query might with great propriety be put to me (from what I have written) to this effect,—that if there is truth in what I have stated, that most hacks might be so mouthed and ridden as to do all that is wanted of them pleasantly in a snaffle, why not hunters?—and why do I advocate the use of double bridles, particularly for hunters whose riders are mostly, more or less, good horsemen?

I have given the reasons on which I found my

opinion that hacks might be ridden in snaffles, and also the reason why they are not. Now the reasons why the hack can, or could, be thus ridden may enable any one, on reflection, to judge why, in a general way, the hunter cannot. His work is different; he has to go over all sorts of ground and fences, and this often when a good deal beat: he therefore requires assistance and support; the hack for pleasure riding does not.

There are perfect snaffle-bridle hunters, – that is, perhaps, one in fifty; but the mouth of the hunter, from different circumstances arising in his day's work, must get more pulling about than that of the hack, who ought, if he is a perfect one, to be able and willing to do his business with the rein on his neck.

My objections to the single snaffle for fox-hunting are these: if a horse pulls what I should term fairly in his gallop, held by the snaffle, we should find it unpleasant, and perhaps all but impossible with the same bit, to collect him, or occasionally to pull him up as quickly as hunting occurrences sometimes require us to do; and if his mouth is so delicate that a snaffle will throw him on his haunches, it would probably be too tender to allow us to give him that assistance that he at times requires for our safety and his own. I will give an instance where a mouth may be too tender.

I was hunting in a part of a country I knew little of. The hounds were put into a large cover, with several rides cut through it. As a stranger, to be ready to get away with the hounds should they find, I got into a ride near the centre of the wood. A fox passed me, and made across a part where there was no ride cut, but was perfectly passable. The hounds owned him and came by me. I got with them, and, on seeing them top the bank and hedge going out, I heard, as they disappeared, splash after splash on the other side; of course I knew it must be water. I put my horse at the fence. He landed on the top of the bank; and I then saw about as ugly a looking bit of sylvan scenery before me as I thought I had ever beheld,—a running stream, in fact brook, of about twelve feet water. Though not much like Cæsar, like him I had here passed the Rubicon; so I gave my nag a pull, and clapped the Latchfords to his sides: instead of giving his head in the right way and leaning on the bit, he threw his nose wildly up, and in we went a souser.

It is extremely rare to find a hunter with that sort of mouth that will permit a proper hold to be taken of his head when we want it, and yet go at other times lightly in hand with the same bridle, or rather bit. A hunter, to be perfect as to mouth, should do all we wish him, more from practically knowing what we wish by the indication of the

bit, than from extreme tenderness of mouth, which, as I have shown, is sometimes objectionable when in difficulty.

An acquaintance of mine makes it a boast that he rides all horses when hunting in snaffles. He thinks a good deal of his horses, a great deal of himself, and something more still of his riding.

Some time since he put me on one of his snaffle bridlers, begged me to give him a canter, and put him over a fence or two; probably thinking to afford me a treat. A more yawing, pully-hauly brute I had scarcely ever ridden. He could thunder along, and thundered over his fences in the same way. His master valued him at a hundred and I know not what, though I had been told neither snaffle, horse, or master was often seen with hounds after the first twenty minutes. On coming up to the master, I was asked my opinion of the horse. Now, in most cases, I certainly should have sacrificed a good deal of veracity to a little courtesy; but, knowing my man, I did not feel it called for here. So he got the opinion he asked for as regarded his horse: "He is worth fifty to carry a whip, and nothing to carry a gentleman;" so much, not for snaffle-bridle horses, but riding such horses in snaffle bridles with hounds.

Having now mentioned all the descriptions of bit that are really useful for ordinary mouthed horses, we will see how far any of them can be

made useful in remedying the unpleasantness of a bad mouth in the horse. "*Nemo repente fuit turpissimus;*" nor was a horse's mouth; and when by the fault of man it has become so, unjust as the act may be towards the animal, we must sometimes be guilty of a little unjust severity to reform it; and custom, without referring to kind feeling, teaches us to somewhat stretch our conscience, when, by perhaps unmerited severity, we can in a shortened time produce beneficial results to ourselves.

We will suppose that a horse has, by constant use of an ordinary fair bit, become so dead and heavy in hand as to be most unpleasant to the rider. There can be little doubt that by putting a good horseman on this horse, he will in a few weeks make an astonishing improvement in the animal's mouth, and would perhaps in the course of time bring it round to be all that could be wished. I have in various instances produced this effect in a very short time by a shortened process, though a very coarse one.

Supposing a horse was brought to me, as many have been, dead in the mouth as an ass. This callosity of mouth, no matter from what cause, is tantamount to the hardness of foot of an Irish pauper accustomed to walk with his feet bare, or those of the phenomenon Paddy who runs with the Queen's hounds. The want of sensibility in

such feet is the consequence of constant contact with hard substances; the callosity of the horse's mouth from constant contact with the bit. So far the feet of the man and mouth of the horse are in the same state, and from similar causes. We will say we wish to produce sensibility to the feet. The long process of so doing would be to give the men shoes and soft stockings. In a few weeks or months, as the case might require as to time, they would by this become in point of sensibility something like the feet of other men; and they would, after a time, find it unpleasant to go barefooted in a gravel road. Thus in process of time we have effected what we wanted, — restored sensibility. So by long continued good riding we might do the same to the horse's mouth. But we want by a quicker mode to produce tenderness in the men's feet. We will therefore oblige them to run on broken, and consequently sharp-pointed, flint stones. We should find the men wince at this; and their feet would be so bruised and wounded as to make them dread contact with the road over which they lately went with perfect confidence. Thus by a short process we effect our end, as to creating sensibility and dread of contact.

We must with the dead-mouthed horse, if we wish to make short work of it, treat him on the same principle. On such a horse I put a bit of such severity as he can not face. Before he leaves his stall I take the bit by the lower branch,

and press it on the horse's mouth. He does not yield to it, having from habit no fear of a bit. Finding this, I gave him a smart snatch. The severity of the bit on the bars of his mouth and on his jaws astonishes him. I try it again. After repeating this a few times, the mouth becomes a little tender; independently of which, the horse finding that if he does not yield his mouth and head at once, he gets a snatch that hurts him, common instinct teaches him to shrink from such contact. I then mount him, knot my curb rein, and either keep it in my right hand or let it rest. I ride him on the snaffle, and if he leans unpleasantly I move it in his mouth, and give him a check, which a motion of the wrist is sufficient to effect. If he does not answer this, I give him a snatch with the severe bit, letting it go as soon as it has effected its temporary purpose. By continuing this, what with his mouth becoming tender and sensible to the touch of the bit, and learning to dread it, he, in a few days, obeys the snaffle, not altogether from minding such impression as *that* may make, but knowing a hint given with that, if not attended to, is a sure prelude to his mouth being punished by the severe one.

Of course, when giving these sorts of lessons, we must choose time and place when we devote ourselves to the horse's tuition, not our own amusement.

It may be surmised that the mouth would get callous during such process. It certainly would if we permitted the horse to lean on the bit; for, like a raw place on the body, if we press the finger on it and *keep* it there, the soreness after a short time is scarcely felt. It is the first touch that hurts; so it is by the mouth. By permitting no *continued* pressure, we keep up sensibility; and having produced that, it is our own fault if we do not keep it up, till habit brings on that attention to the indication of the hand on the bit that punishment first taught.

To carry out such process, a rider should be quite confident in his own patience and command of temper, and recollect that he is, by very severe measures, rectifying what is no fault or vice in the animal, but merely an unpleasantness that may arise from natural causes or from injudicious treatment. We are, therefore, in no way called upon, or even authorised, in doing what we may do as a punishment, but as a necessary severity, to bring about a certain effect; and it should be done with as little severity as the production of that effect will permit, the necessary amount of which, of course, depends on the nature of the animal's mouth, his tractability of disposition, and susceptibility of instruction. But, be the horse what he might, I never found one on whom such rough lessons failed in making an improvement.

There are two pressures of the ordinary curb bridle: the one on the bars of the mouth, and sometimes the tongue; the other by the curb chain on the jaw. And, lest the novice may get into a scrape, let me recommend him to put very little reliance on the effect of the latter, so far as its acting with severity on the jaw is concerned, for in itself it makes very little impression; therefore, when we tighten a curb, let it be understood it is not done with an idea of its acting with increased severity on the jaw; for when once the bit is pulled back, so as to let the chain become tight, it matters little whether it be a link or two shorter or longer; for, provided we have lever enough with the lower branch of the bit to bring the curb in full force against the back of the jaw, we increase the severity but in a trifling degree by shortening it. The severity this occasions is by giving the bit increased pressure on the bars of the mouth, by keeping the lever of the lower branch in a more perpendicular situation. And this the reader would find out, if he was to put into a hard puller's mouth an ordinary proportioned bit, with a very low port. This resting on the tongue, and the bars of the bit not coming on those of the horse's mouth, he would have little more to depend on to hold his horse than the trifling severity of the pressure of the curb chain on the jaw; and for this, after five minutes, a hard pulling horse

would not care at all. The dependence on the severity of the bit must be placed on the height of the port and length of lever below. The novice must not, therefore, always consider himself safe as regards his being able to hold his horse because he has a curb bridle in his mouth, for curb bridles (without differing so much in appearance, when in the mouth, as to be noticed by those not judges of such things) may be made so as to be severe enough to risk breaking a horse's jaw, or so as to be very nearly as easy as a snaffle, and, indeed, far less efficacious than a sharply twisted one.

We will suppose a horse with a very tender mouth poked out his nose, and carried his head unpleasantly high in a snaffle; a curb bit may be made so perfectly easy as, by altering the pressure, to bring the head down, and yet enable the horse to face it.

This being the case, I trust my reader will feel satisfied that I consult his convenience and safety in recommending to him, in a general way, the double bridle; for they may be made to suit all sorts of mouths, and all sorts of hands, by keeping in view, "the ruder the hand is, the less severe should the bit be." And this I confidently give as a rule ever to be observed by a rider, "Never give a rude pull or check at a horse's mouth if a less forcible one will produce the effect wanted."

CHAPTER VI.

GOOD TASTE IN HORSE EQUIPMENTS RECOMMENDED. — "FINERY" TO BE AVOIDED. — USEFULNESS OF THICK REINS. — THE LIP STRAP. — ROUND FOREHEAD BANDS AND NECK STRAPS. — THE THROAT-LATCH. — USELESS APPENDAGES TO BE AVOIDED. — "LATCHFORD'S" BITS. — FOREHEAD BANDS ABANDONED IN THE FIELD. — BEST KIND OF SADDLES. — STIRRUPS AND BUCKLES.

In the different descriptions of bit I have mentioned, we have, by getting either more or less severe of its kind, all that can be wanted for ordinary horses and riding; but as, doubtless, the reader would wish to exhibit good taste as well as judgment in his horse appointments, I will venture a hint or two on these.

Any man with good sense would, I should think, wish to do that which would afford him credit among men of good sense also; so I should infer that a man would wish to exhibit good taste to those who could appreciate it. As I have said persons of good sense would do that which they hold to be sensible, it will naturally be inferred that the taste I recommend is my own. It is what some persons would *call* their *own;*

but *I do not*, for it is merely a taste that I have adopted and used from seeing it in use among men of taste and of good judgment in such matters. The taste, good or bad, is therefore that of others, not my own; and if good, which I hope it is, the only merit I can claim is having selected good samples for imitation.

In the first place then, I hold all and every sort of finery and frippery about horses to be the worst possible taste. I do not call the massive harness of the horses of the sovereign finery — that is part of a gorgeous pageant befitting royalty on state occasions; so are a state carriage, state harness, and state liveries, quite in character with a nobleman going to court: but, on ordinary occasions, nothing bespeaks bad taste more than finery, and particularly so in regard to horse equipments. Such should ever be in accordance with circumstances; for instance, highly and heavily ornamented harness, brass or plated, would be execrable taste if exhibited by a lady driving her phaeton, so would be black with a coachman wearing his wig.

So on an un-English-looking horse, are round reins, particularly black ones; throat-latches, with loose appendages dangling behind the horse's jaw; ornaments of leather roses or stars on the cheek pieces and forehead band; fly-catchers, or fly-flappers, or whatever they are called, bobbing on

the horse's nose; a bit ornamented, twisted, and turned in all useless directions. All this may be very pretty as an article, but is very bad taste in a bridle for common use. It would look very well, and be very appropriate, on the head of an Arab, ridden by a pacha of Egypt; but as a private individual would not be taken for a pacha, it is not unlikely his finery might suggest the idea of his being a quack doctor, or perhaps a far less clever fellow.

If a man really determines to use such an appendage on his horse's head, I should say to him this: get a foreign horse, adopt a foreign seat (and let that seat be a good one); let your dress be to a certain degree foreign; sport a never-take-me-alive moustache, and be taken for a foreigner: you would then not be censured for incongruity of taste, because the whole would be in keeping. Look foreign or look English, — I care not which. — but don't sport a French postilion's boots and pigtail, and all the rest English, nor fine bridles on English horses.

But without going to such lengths, there is taste and judgment to be exhibited in adapting the direct English bridle to the sort of horse that is to wear it.

A horse with the look and gait of a racehorse or sensible-looking hunter, would look extremely ill-appointed in a hard and sharp. The bridle and

horse would not be in character, nor would a charger or Spanish jennet be so in a hunting snaffle. The galloping thorough-bred hack I have mentioned, provided the bridle suited him, would look well in a light snaffle with a spice of the racing cut about it. A cob would not, however well he possibly might go in it; nor would a rider who looked as if his fifteen stone had been got up by the good things of life, accord with the galloping bit of steel either.

A horse with a coarse head should wear a large bit and bridle. If his mouth is light, have the bit as easy as will suit him, but let it look in proportion to the head, a small bit and narrow reins render deformity more deformed in appearance: "quære," what would round ones do?

This brings us to the subject of reins. These really, in a minor degree, are of some importance to the pleasantness of riding. Of all things there is nothing I more abominate than a rein thick in substance and coarse in grain; and the one generally accompanies the other. Nor is the very thick coarse one stronger than the one thinner and finer in texture, for the goodness and toughness of the one is equivalent to the bulk of the other. We never see racing reins thick; for if they were, in the first place they could not be neatly knotted, and their sharp thick edges and coarse grain would gall the naked hand. If you want extra

strength, get a little extra width; but a good rein should be, comparatively speaking, pliable, and fine in the grain as a kid glove.

A lip strap to a bit should never be omitted, if a horse is at all disposed to catch at his bit, that is, get hold of the branch on his under teeth. If he once does this, away he goes, if disposed to do so, for no man could hold him

I prefer round forehead bands and round neck straps for hunters. The first, having no edges, do not gall the ear; the latter may be made of sufficient strength, and yet not look clumsy. For in hunting, let a man ride as bold as he may, he will occasionally find, in some countries, fences so blind and awkward, that he is compelled to get off his horse, and let him creep and slide up and down as he can; and in doing so, if a horse hangs back, and the throat-latch gives way, off comes the bridle.

There is also a proper medium to be observed as regards the proper tightness or looseness of the throat-latch. I would know a horse-dealer, or, what is a far less respectable person, a horse-dealing *soi-disant* gentleman, by the looseness of his. He leaves his so because he conceives it sets off the appearance of his horse's head. To a certain point it does so; and nothing is worse, or looks more regular cockneylike, than a tight throat-latch; but letting it hang below the larger half of the jaw looks slovenly, and dealer- in-

stead of gentlemanlike. It should hang loose, no doubt; but the true medium is, loose enough to look easy, and just tight enough to prevent the bridle getting over the ears. If too tight, it looks as if a man did not know how it ought to be; if preposterously loose, it looks very much as if he was riding a horse for sale — the latter being to a gentleman the more objectionable of the two inferences. I would recommend every man to do what he does well, and, if he can, artistically. If he hunts his own hounds, let him take as much trouble, and do it as well as a huntsman; if he rides a race, let him ride it (if he can) as well as a professional — let him look perfectly jockeylike in all he does; if he drives his four horses, let him do so in a coachmanlike way, and let him do all and every thing necessary for that. Whether huntsman, jockey, or coachman, let him do what he does as near as he can as well as the professional; but in doing that, never let him do anything that calls forth doubt of his being a gentleman. I hate to see a man do anything about horses like a muff; but I detest still more seeing him do the same thing in a slangy way — for there is slang of manner as well as of language — both or either weak and reprehensible in the attempt, degrading and disgusting in the execution, and neither evincing any proof of the artist, but a great deal of low conduct and low mind.

There is another addition many persons have to their bridles, namely, a goodly assemblage of billets. Some bring forward, in excuse of these most unworkmanlike appendages, the advantage of taking the bits off to clean. The groom who cannot clean a bit without soiling the reins is, depend on it, quite unfit to clean horses or bridles. Again, may be brought forward the advantage of changing bits to the same set of reins. A man must cut very close indeed, if a bridle or two make any difference in his annual expenses. Billets are abominations my reader really must not contemplate.

I advocate what buckles are necessary to a bridle being a long square (if I may use the term); whether they are prettier or the reverse than the rounded ones, is mere matter of taste. I think they look workmanlike, because there is a sensible advantage in them. They do not bend the rein, do not wear its edges, and when wanted to be shifted, run more easily, and admit of rollers to enable them to do so. The reader can now use which sort of buckle he pleases. I always have one each side my throat-latch; it prevents the want of a long end, which is usually the case where there is but one buckle.

I would always recommend bits being bought of a bit maker, not a saddler: no better man than Latchford. I should not doubt getting a good bit

of an eminent saddler, but I *know* I get a good one from Latchford; and as his bits neither bend nor break, one of his will last quite as long as the purchaser, which I conclude would quite satisfy him.

Saddlers will all tell you that London bit-makers do not make their own bits — that most of them are got up from Walsall. I know that as well as the saddlers, for I have seen them making at Walsall. A veterinary surgeon does not turn the horse-shoe from the bar of iron, or hammer it, but if he superintends the finishing of it, it is quite enough; and it is quite enough if the bit is finished by Latchford's workmen: bad bits would not be sent to or received by him to finish.

Many persons use riband on the forehead-band. It would not now be considered as strictly sporting in the hunting field, merely because fast men have left off using it. Now I will let my reader into the true secret of their doing so. It arose with men who rode the finest horses that could be got, and the little bit of affectation was, "such horses as *we* ride require no setting off;" for I am quite certain these coloured bands do give life to a horse's countenance, and are still used by many on their London horses, — and very well they look. But I hold that there are but three admissible colours — light blue, purple, and crimson, either of which looks well. Yellow used to be the chief

hunting colour; and I can just remember my father leaving off yellow fronts when I first took to riding, though he ever continued them on his carriage horses. Some few persons use white, but it looks dealer-like; and if of white japanned leather, it is all but Smithfield.

We now come to the subject of saddles. These are in no degree varied like bits in point of make; in fact, I may almost say that, for road riding, there is but one gentlemanly sort of saddle — the Shaftoed upper-flapped, and stuffed lower-flapped saddle. The Shaftoed flap is merely two thin pieces of leather instead of one stout one; and the advantage it has is this — it is pliable, so that in putting on or off the stirrup-leathers, it does not crack, which the common strong one, after a short time, invariably would do; and now no good saddle is made without, though in truth very many bad ones are often made with.

There is the Anglesey saddle and the mere stuffed seated saddle,— both perfectly gentlemanly and pleasant to use; but we seldom see them with young men; in short, I should say, they have no right to such indulgence.

The reader will, perhaps, pay me the compliment of asking what I consider a good and gentlemanly saddle. I can do much better for him than giving my description of one, by recommending him to go to Wilkinson and Kidd's, in

Oxford Street, see one of their best saddles, and he will be certain to see as perfectly gentlemanly and well-made a saddle as manufacture can produce. In mentioning that house I in no way mean to say there are not others that can turn out as good a piece of workmanship; but Wilkinson and Kidd certainly have the merit of being the first to introduce a peculiar cut, which has never gone out since its first introduction. But of late years there are saddles made by other makers, quite as good in workmanship, and equally so in taste.

The reader will, therefore, save himself and me a great deal of trouble, and will not risk my giving a bad description of a saddle, or his not understanding it, by simply getting his horse fitted in Oxford Street. He will then be certain he has as good a saddle, as a man can have; and by frequently comparing his own with others, will become a far better judge of a saddle than any description of one I can give would make him.

I will, however, give a few leading observations about saddles, that I am sure will be useful to the novice. Never go to any direct military saddler for a hunting saddle, or one that you wish to look like one: do not go to a saddler whose workmen are chiefly engaged in harness making; and, above all, if you want a gentleman's saddle, avoid people who make for exportation. I should no more

think of going to one of those for a hunting saddle, than I should to Oldacre (who can make one) for a cart-horse collar.

Never get a small saddle for road or hunting, whether your weight be light or heavy. If light, a pound or two as to weight is of no consequence; and if heavy, a small saddle will cut your horse's back to pieces. Sixteen inches I consider the smallest saddle that ought to be used, and eighteen for a heavy or tall man; if smaller, the heavy weight will gall and be carried uncomfortably, from its not being properly distributed along the horse's back; and with a small saddle a tall man must sit so far on the hinder part of it as to crush, or rather wound, the loins,—by small I mean short, that is, measured from the lower corner of the cantle to the front, exclusive of the pannel.

If a novice should fancy there is anything knowing-looking in a small saddle, he is wrong there, to begin with,—for nothing can be knowing that is contrary to sense and reason; and if, to oppose my assertion that small saddles hurt horses, he may say racehorses are ridden in such, the answer is ready,—they are obliged to be ridden in such to save weight. But racing saddles are made as long as they possibly can be made, in proportion to their weight, and in that proportion are much longer than hunting saddles; and though jockeys

are forced to ride on very small saddles, they much prefer riding on larger when the weight will allow it. Independently of this, jockeys are, on an average, little more than as many minutes on their horse as a hunting man is hours on his; but beyond all this, racehorses' backs are often a good deal chafed,— sometimes very much so during the racing season, short as is the time they carry a racing saddle.

Some saddlers are famous for giving a roomy and easy seat to the rider on the saddles they make, others quite the reverse, though their saddles are quite as heavy as the well-proportioned one, and are only fit to send to a West India planter to ride on about his sugar plantations, mounted on a mule.

I will give the reader a hint, by attending to which he will derive considerable advantage; (it is on a trifling difference in the lower flap of a saddle, yet one I never saw attended to by the best judges in such matters;) it is this: —

I think it must be quite clear that, supposing two men — one five feet three, and another five feet eleven — were both well proportioned, were both to get into their saddles, the leg of the tall man must come lower down on the flap of the saddle than that of the short one. Supposing these were each to order a saddle of an eminent maker, desiring it to be about sixteen or seventeen

inches, and with its appendages to weigh twelve or thirteen pounds, — about the usual weight of a hunting saddle, — the lower flap of each would be stuffed and made alike. What is the consequence? We should see the calf of the leg of the short man touching — in fact, resting against — the lower part of the saddle-flap, — and he gets a firm hold by it; but the same part of the leg of the tall man coming still lower down, it is just opposite to that part of the flap which is the thinnest, and where, in fact, except before the leg, there is no stuffing at all; consequently, the same part of his leg will be an inch away from that part of the flap, and not rest on it like the other's (if on occasion it is wanted to do so), to give an additional grip of his horse, unless, indeed, he was bow-legged. A man with a large calf could get this hold; but suppose, like me, he happens to be one of "the lean kine," and what over-calf he carries about with him is anywhere but on his legs, he can only rely on his knees, in a general way.

Now if my reader should happen to be one of the spindle-shanked sort, if he will direct his saddler to carry his flap stuffing down lower than usual, it will be tantamount to having a calf to his leg; and as the stuffing of a saddle-flap is lighter than the stuffing of a calf, we light-timbered gentry must set the advantage our horse gains

against the loss we sustain by the absence of handsome legs: however, bless the man who first patronised trousers for dress; no doubt he was one of us.

Most persons prefer stirrups broad in the tread, and I believe they are, to the greater proportion of riders, the most comfortable; but for my own use, from habit, I prefer a narrow one; and, again, I like the feel of a light stirrup. They, like most other things, have their advantages and the reverse. If a man wishes to have the old safety-spring stirrups, they must, of course, be heavy; but spring bars have nearly exploded the spring stirrup.

Habit has a vast influence on many trifles connected with riding: for instance, I cannot ride with any comfort with a thick sole to my boot, I never feel that I have any hold of my stirrup; I do really believe a man with a thick unyielding sole does oftener lose his stirrup than the man who uses thin ones.

Most stirrups are made with the eye that takes the stirrup leather the segment of a circle. If a man will have what the generality of persons use, merely on that account, of course he can and will do so; but stirrups thus made are really objectionable; they bend the stirrup leather into their own form; and then supposing that from use it stretches, — which, more or less, it will do, — the

curvature cannot be got rid of, and they are difficult to alter as to length. The eye should be flat at the top (barrel-eyed, as it is technically termed), so as to let the leather bear evenly on it; it can then be easily lengthened or shortened, and it retains its original flat form, and wears longer. They also wear far better made the flesh side outwards, and, I consider, look more workman-like. All stirrup-leather buckles should be what is termed double-barred; not for the very unsportsman-like practice of putting the end of the stirrup-leather through the eye or interstice between the bars, but because such buckles permit the leather to be more easily altered, and, being in themselves longer, the leather lies flatter beneath the upper flap of the saddle.

CHAPTER VII.

MOUNTING THE HORSE. — ADVANCING. — USUAL BUT ABSURD HABITS. — POSITION OF THE HANDS. — POSITION OF THE BODY. — COMMON ERRORS. — RESULTS OF PRACTICE. — CROSS PURPOSES. — HANDY AND UNHANDY HORSES. — INCLINING A HORSE TO THE RIGHT OR LEFT. — TURNING TO RIGHT OR LEFT. — SHYING AND STARTING.

HAVING made some observations on the circumstances likely to make or mar a horseman, on habits that should be encouraged or avoided, on the description of horse I consider best adapted to ordinary road riding, and on such horse equipment as I hold to be required for the same purpose, I will suppose my reader furnished with what he considers likely to please him; and we will now turn our attention to the using of them.

We will now suppose the reader about to mount his horse. He might ask me the best way of doing this, or might say, "How do you mount your horse?" This last question, if it was put, would, odd as it may appear, be something of a poser, and one I really could not answer in a

satisfactory way; for, so that I get between the head and tail of the animal, I have, in fact, no prescribed rule by which I effect the purpose. Nor could I exactly say how I sit down on my chair. I draw it towards me, or move towards it, make some sort of a genuflexion, and find myself seated. But my inability to answer the question as to my way of getting on my horse is no loss to the reader, as it matters nothing how I do so; but I believe I can tell him what is of some consequence, viz., the mode of doing so with convenience and safety to himself.

There are three ways of mounting. The first is the military one. The rider stands with his left breast near his horse. After collecting his reins, and getting them in his bridle-hand, he twists a portion of the mane round his thumb, places the stirrup on his foot with his right hand, which is then placed on the cantle of the saddle; he springs up and stands nearly upright, resting on his one leg in the stirrup; the leg is then carried over, and he seats himself, putting the stirrup on his right foot with the right hand. This is all very well and proper for the manège rider or the dragoon, and for uniformity's sake must be observed by every soldier; but it possesses no absolute advantages on all occasions, and may therefore be dispensed with by the general rider when he finds it convenient to do so.

The next way is to place the right breast nearest the horse, by which, to a certain degree, the back of the rider will be towards the animal's tail. In this situation the reins must be held in the right hand, and that placed on the saddle; the left puts the stirrup on the foot; it then takes the reins from the other hand. This done, it is placed on the pommel or neck of the horse; the right hand is placed on the cantle; and by giving the body a swing round, and springing from the right foot, the rider gets into the same situation, standing on his left in the stirrup, as he was in the first manner of mounting; then, by one swing you are in your seat.

The third mode is certainly not *secundum artem*, but that is of little consequence to one who means to please himself in what he does; and to this there can be no objection, provided what he is about does not produce danger or disadvantage to him or to his horse, or incur ridicule from others. And, indeed, the absence of studied manner does away, in many things, with a certain indication of the professor, that is quite unnecessary in a private individual; bearing, however, in mind, that the fundamental principle of the right way of doing things, though not strictly adhered to, must not be lost sight of.

The third way of mounting, then, is the most simple, and certainly shows a man quite at his

ease as to getting on his horse. In doing this he neither turns his back to the head or tail of his horse, but, walking gently up to him, he takes his reins easily up in his left hand, and puts his foot in, or here I should rather say on, the tread of his stirrup, just as he would on the roller bolt of a carriage, if going to get on its box. His breast being parallel with the side of his horse, he accomplishes this easily, as the stirrup generally so hangs as to offer itself to the foot without being directed by the hand. The foot thus placed, one hand, with the reins in it, is placed on the horse's mane, grasping a portion of it; the other placed on the cantle, to direct the body straight up, on the rider springing from his right leg. He then, as usual, throws himself gently into his saddle.

And now, in mounting in any way, let me mention one circumstance the rider must bear in mind as a rule strictly to be observed; — the hands placed on the horse's neck or on the saddle are merely to *guide* the body, but are not placed there as a hold for the rider to pull himself up by; for a fidgetty horse would by no means approve of his mane being converted into a kind of tow-rope to a sixteen-stone gentleman, or any gentleman; and a man hauling himself by the saddle up the side of his horse, about as handily as I should haul myself up the side of a vessel, would

have a much worse result than my fresh-water mode of getting on deck; for I should in no way disarrange the deck, but he most probably would his saddle; and, should his horse be round in his body, most certainly would do so. And if, from the shape of the animal, such was not the result, the saddle, pressing on the off side of the wither, would pinch the horse and make him uneasy. The mounting must be, with the least possible assistance, wholly performed by the spring from the foot resting on the ground.

Some one particular specimen of obesity may say he cannot spring from his foot and instep. In such case, I make no further remark than mentioning one made by a maître de danse to a well-fed juvenile, the son of a friend of mine, who, when in France, conceived, I suppose, that the spirit of that saltant nation would be infused into the heels of young hopeful by contact with the soil. At a particular part of a lesson, perhaps some entrechat, le maître cried out, "Spring, sare! spring!" The young gentleman made the attempt two or three times, with the agility of a young sucking rhinoceros. "I can't do it," said the boy,—"I can't spring," "No spring, no spring, sare!" cried le maître, looking aghast, "then what for de d—l you come learn de danse?"

But not to allow the fat gentleman to remain either in despair or on the pavement, I can

safely recommend two things that will prevent either catastrophe, — a high mounting block and a low cob.

In mounting, and particularly in the last mode, the rider must be on his guard, when putting his foot on the stirrup, not to let the toe come in contact with the brisket of his horse, as, in that case, a ticklish one might give, or try to give, his rider a grip ; and a timid or fidgetty one would either go on or sidle away from him, — neither of which are pleasant habits for a horse to get into.

There are certain inconveniences that may possibly occasionally occur from any mode of mounting ; for instance, in mounting in the regular military way, with your back nearly to the horse's head, unless you hold your reins so as to feel any tightening of the off rein, you might get a nibble from a horse disposed to do so while you were placing your foot in the stirrup; and many horses would do this perhaps as much from play as vice. And again, in mounting with the back to the tail, the rider might get a kick while his eye was off the horse's hind foot. But though this certainly does sometimes happen from a horse with so bad a propensity, fortunately there is not one in a hundred that has it.

The only objection I could ever perceive to the third mode would only refer to a short-armed

man. He might find some difficulty in keeping his hands on his horse and saddle while putting his foot on the stirrup; but for myself, being, I suppose, distantly related to the long-armed tribe of animals we see sometimes exhibited, I do not experience this inconvenience. I do not recommend its adoption, as it is a deviation from rule — I only say I find it as good as any other.

All persons mount on the near side. This is, like many other uniform practices, a very absurd one. Certainly the sensible thing would be for a man to learn to mount on either side with equal facility, and the horse should be accustomed to its being done.

We approach a horse in the stable, and, indeed, every where else, on the near side. Why do we do so? From being aware that the animal, being accustomed to our doing so, would perhaps be alarmed, or kick at us, if we went up to him on the other. Can anything show more the folly of such uniform practice?

When horses are standing in their stalls, grooms oblige them to stand close to the off standing; and if such grooms happen to be second-rate ones, if they find a horse peaceably enjoying his quiet on the near side of his stall, a hit with the fork handle, or a cut on the near thigh with a wet shammy, sends the astonished animal across his stall, — where, with a snort and

his ears erect, he turns round and looks at the fool, wondering what is the matter. If a man keeps horses for sale, it is all fair to make them stand to show themselves to advantage, as such horses have little else to do; but if a horse is in work, he has at least the right, when at rest, to stand as best suits him.

We will now suppose the rider, a friend of mine, to be mounted, let him have done this in which way he may; and, wanting a better, takes me as his companion and temporary instructor.

Knowing that if I move my horse, his will follow without any indication from the rider, I sit still. The horses both stand side by side,—I on the off one, "Now," say I, "tighten your near rein a little, and advance your hand just enough to give your horse his head, that he may be sensible of the movement, which probably he will understand means go on; if he does not do so, just press him by your left leg, or heel if he requires it. This brings his croup towards the pavement, and his head towards the street; no difficulty in that: had we been on the other side of the street, the movement must have been just the reverse."

"Now, tell me, do I hold my hand right?" "Before I look," replied I, "I need only say that walking quietly, as we are, in a fair open space, it matters little how you hold it, provided it be not in such a position as you never see a horseman

place his, and the less appearance of study there is in it, the better and easier it looks; but now let us look at you." "Am I right?" says my friend. "Yes, right enough for a dragoon, but too right for a pupil of the author of mere 'Practical Horsemanship.' Why all that stiffness in the position of your hand? You look as if you had a perpendicular iron rising from the pommel of your saddle, and had it in your grasp; and you hold the knuckle of your thumb as directly facing the sky as if you were holding a sundial on it, and were catching the sun's rays. Turn your thumb more down, your knuckles, as it were, nearly across your horse, which you will find to be about the position your arm held easily will direct it. And now for the other arm. Do not let it hang straight down as if you had lost it, and it was only your sleeve dangling there; nor hold your stick at full length, hanging downwards like a sword in its scabbard, and your hand confined by the hilt: hold it a few inches from the hook, easily, and let your arm, in an unstudied and easy bent position, rest on your thigh. Your horse is a free one; were he not so, you should hold your stick nearer the crook with the small end uppermost, ready to threaten or hit your nag if he wants it. Come, now you sit a little more as if you were used to it, and, I should think, more at your ease also."

"Well," says my friend, laughing, "as you

seem rather difficult to please, I suppose I carry my body wrong." "Notwithstanding what you say about my being difficult to please," said I, "I can only tell you, that, if you would be as easily seated as I am easily pleased, you would really sit much better than you do. You don't sit bolt upright on your chair, what on earth makes you do so on your horse?" "Why," says my friend, "I have read treatises on Horsemanship that direct you to do so, and I have seen prints representing the same thing." "So you have," replied I, — "treatises on military and manège riding, — but perhaps you have not seen one on ordinary road riding; and as a set-off to your prints (and I guess the class that have caught your eye), did you ever look at any of Alkin's spirited and truly characteristic sketches? If you have, I will answer for it you saw no bolt upright seats there; or if you ever carefully looked at the representations of the Egyptians on their horses, you would see no stiffness in them. Their seat is ease and elegance combined; not quite an advantageous one for a hunter, I admit, but the beau idéal of an elegant horseman. Many have, doubtless, also said that the rider is to look straight between his horse's ears; but this is far more requisite for a female than a male rider, in order to teach the former a difficult part of their riding, namely, sitting on the middle of their saddle. But a man, being equally

poised by his legs, does not require so much attention to this, for he must be a most lop-sided being indeed if he cannot balance his body. But to show that sitting stiffly upright has nothing to do with this, we will look at an artiste on the tight rope. He is taught to keep his eye fixed between the cross that supports his rope — and well may a man want to do this with only about two inches' diameter to stand on. But necessary as it is to him to preserve a perfect equilibrium, we do not see his body stiff; on the contrary, it yields and bends in various graceful positions: in fact, if he held himself stiffly, he would fall. And the body being absolutely straight, does not place the weight one atom more in the proper place on the saddle, than of the man who sits in an easy and somewhat curved position; in fact, if the body is held stiff, it feels every motion of the horse, whereas by yielding to it, as we do to the motion of a vessel, our bodies actually retain their real perpendicularity more than by keeping them upright. When a horse is standing still, or walking, or trotting on perfectly level ground, the body should certainly be as near as may be perpendicular, that is, so far as lateral inclination goes; but sitting with the body quite upright, from the absence of any flexion of the back, has no advantage in it to the horse, and many disadvantages to the rider, independent of its want of ease, both

in look and reality. If a man has a firm seat, and has his saddle so made, and so sits on it, as that his weight rests nearly in its centre, his body will not be far from its proper equilibrium, without the rider taking, or showing that he is taking, any pains to keep it there. If a lady sits handsomely on her horse, she will, without taking any trouble to do so, sit in the proper place on her saddle; and if she sits in that place, she will, more or less, in accordance with the natural grace of her person, sit well and gracefully on her horse. I am aware there are ladies who sit remarkably well on their horses, but not gracefully; but this arises from their not being graceful women anywhere. So are many men good, but not graceful horsemen. But on one thing you may rely, men who look stiff and ride stiff on their horse are very rarely good horsemen, and never graceful ones; and what is worse, their appearance carries with it a surmise that they are not as good horsemen as they perhaps are."

"Come," said my good-humoured companion, seeing me smile as we went along; "out with it,—what am I doing wrong now?" "You are really doing nothing absolutely wrong,—you are only trying to do something." "How do you know that?" replies my friend. "I know it," said I, "by the motion of your hand." "Well, come now, do tell me what you think I was at."

"Why," said I, "you were trying to bring your horse closer up to me, and you could not,—that's all." "Well," said my friend, "that's true enough; but why would he not do as I wished him?" "Simply because you did that which was calculated to make him do what was the reverse of your wish. This I will easily explain; you will then at once see why your horse did not do what you wished him. If a bit is of any use in a horse's mouth, it is to control, assist, and guide him, as the case may require. In guiding him, a pressure on the off side of the mouth inclines him to the right, and pressure on the near side to the left; you know this, and yet, acting in direct opposition to such principle taught you and your horse, you expect him to understand what you want him to do." "Why!" cried my friend, "I wanted him to go to the right, and I passed my hand to that side." "By which, if he acted in accordance with what he had been taught, he would have turned to the left; but, as it happened, he kept straight on. But I will make you see this in a very few words. You have your reins in one hand and very properly of an equal length; you pass your hand towards the right,—this, as you will see immediately, not only loosens the bearing you had on the right side of his mouth, but, worse than that, creates an additional bearing on the left; so you see, your horse would have actually rebelled

against the indication of the bit had he obeyed your wishes. But that you may not find fault with yourself, or be surprised if you see other horses obey the same motion you made to yours, I will tell you how this would occur. Your horse is only four years old, and has not been ridden much since he was very well broke: consequently, the lessons of the breaker are fresh in his memory,—he obeys the bit. Now, it is a common practice with forty-nine men in fifty to do just what you did; so that in course of time horses learn to obey the pressure of the rein on either side of the neck, and turn from that, though the indication of the bit in their mouths has a direct opposite tendency; and they are taught to do this by the folly and injustice of their riders in this way. A man wishes his horse to turn to the right; he does what you did,—presses his hand to the right. If the horse is nicely-mouthed, he obeys, as he supposes, the wishes of the rider, and turns towards the left: what is the reward of his docility? a stripe on the left shoulder or on his nose, a cram with the spurs, and then a forcible pull to the right; and when wanted to turn to the left, if he does not obey a false indication, he is punished in the same way,—in fact, is beat into disobeying that which a colt-breaker has been weeks, or perhaps months, in perfecting him in, namely,—strict and immediate attention to the rider's hand on the bit. Practice

will teach a horse anything his attributes render it possible for him to do. I could shortly teach a horse to turn to the right if I pressed one hand on his left hip, or to go to the left if I pressed the right one; it would only be following the pressure on the hip by a pull at the rein. This done many times a day, would in a short time make him turn on the hip being pressed before we pulled the rein.

"We have no more right to expect a horse to obey a mere pressure on his neck till he is taught to know its import, than we should have a pressure on his hip; yet this is not only expected to be understood by the horse, but to be obeyed in defiance of all he has been taught to the contrary."

To turn a horse to the right or left readily, with the rider's reins in one hand, he must be very well bitted and very handy, unless he has some inducement to do so of his own accord. If he has a fine mouth, and is going well up to his bit at the time, turning the wrist more downwards, and bringing the hand nearer to the body, and at the same time more to the left than it was held in going straight forward, will readily turn such a horse to the right, particularly if aided by the right heel touching him as far back towards his stifle as convenient at the same time, the latter act causing him to bring his croup to the near side. In order to go to the left, the wrist is turned the reverse way, so as to show the

nails of the hand to the rider, and the left rein pressed by the finger next it, bringing the whole hand a little to the right, and the left heel used, the horse will come to the left; but in all such cases, unless a horse is very handy, a rein should be taken in each hand, and then the thing is done to a certainty,—of course the shortness of the turn depending on the pressure used on the horse's mouth.

On any plain and level surface you may turn your horse in his walk, at any moment, as short as in reason you please; but as you may not always have the advantage of being so situated, there are circumstances under which a horse would very properly, if he was a sensible one, refuse to obey your reins and heel at the precise moment; — for instance, whether a horse is walking, trotting, cantering, or galloping, there must necessarily ever be a leading leg. LEADING is, perhaps, best applied to the canter and the gallop; so in the walk and trot we will substitute *advancing* for *leading* leg. That such is necessary to easy or useful progression must be clear to any one who has seen a donkey with his fore-legs manacled. The ridiculous efforts the animal makes in lifting up both legs together, and putting them both down, perhaps a few inches beyond the place they were lifted from, shows the advantage of a leading leg: in such case

there is none — consequently there is comparatively no progression.

Were we to apply the term leading leg to the walk or trot, it might, and indeed would, indicate these paces to be performed as a youngster gets up stairs, — by stumping up them with always one leg in advance; but as the horse moves his legs equally and alternately in his walk and trot, one or other is of course the advancing one, which renders that term the proper one in these paces.

We will suppose the reader to be riding down a country lane, with a very deep cart rut on each side of him. He sees something coming. He wishes to cross the rut, we will say, to the left, to give the object its right side of the road to pass. If at the moment he wishes his horse to cross that rut he happens to be advancing the right leg, he can no more cross it at that precise moment than he can fly; he must wait till he sets his right foot on the ground. He then raises his left to advance it. He can now place that where he pleases, provided it be forwards, backwards, or sideways to the left. He *now* obeys the rider's wish, and steps over the rut safely, which he could not have effected before; yet for this trivial and sensible delay, an ignorant rider will often give him a stroke of the whip, or one or both spurs, — a proper return, truly, for having more sense than the animal on him.

It is a very common thing to see an awkward

fellow, if running a horse in hand, get his foot or heel trod on in turning round. He looks up at the horse as if he could annihilate him, and but for the master being present would most probably give the horse a blow, venting something against the horse's "awkward eyes" for treading on him. Now the horse's awkwardness had no more to do with it than the eyes. I always laugh when I see a lout come hopping back after, not such a contretemps, but a contrepas. It does him good. Having felt the effect, I explain to him the cause, which saves him a recurrence of it in future, and saves the horse probably a broom-stick as soon as the fellow gets him out of sight. The reason the horse trod on the man was this, he pulled him sharp round just as the horse was placing his near foot on the ground; feeling the pull and twist given him, the horse puts his foot on the ground many inches nearer the left than he would have done, and claps it on the man's toes or heel as either may be in the way: had he gently turned him on his lifting up the near foot, he would have put it in advance of that of the man's, and they would have turned quietly together.

We also frequently see a little confusion in a horse being turned into a stable-door that he has approached with his side towards it. This confusion arises from the same cause as the first circumstance: the man wants the horse to turn in

quickly to the left, while he is advancing the right leg, or *vice versâ*, which he cannot do; and in his endeavours to make the animal perform an impossibility, he throws him into confusion, and then correction, or the fear of it, makes the thing worse.

It is true, we often see a horse in a canter turn a corner quickly to the left when leading with the right leg. If he has been practised to do this, is very handy and quick on his legs, he can do it by changing the leading leg just as he makes his turn; but a rider should be very certain of his horse before he trusts him; for should he not do this, but attempt to turn by crossing the leading leg over the supporting one, he will probably come on his head or side. All horses should be practised to change their leg handily when necessary. I had a mare that by the hand and heel I could make change her leg in going straight on in a canter at any moment. She would canter in a figure of eight, in a sheep-fold, as long as you liked, and change her leg at every proper turn without any signal from the rider; but such instances are not common, particularly in horses that have never been in a riding-school, as was the case with this mare. I bought her with hounds, my wife rode her with hounds, and I sold her with hounds; and though it has nothing to do with the subject in hand, I will

mention a peculiarity about her that induced me to part with her. The moment that flies began to appear, and till they disappeared, it was impossible to ride her in any comfort, and from hearing them buzz, or feeling one on her in the stable, she would kick and sweat by the hour together.

Although the horse can turn thus readily in a canter, if he changes his leg, I will show the reader why he cannot, or at least will not, do the same in a walk or trot. Most persons, in walking with another, have often found themselves doing so uncomfortably, from not stepping with their companion, or he with them; and we often see persons making most futile attempts to get right. They, like the horse in turning, should change the advancing leg; till they do they never can get right. The "change step" is very simple when once learned, but very perplexing till it is. Now we do teach horses to change, in cantering, but do not find it requisite to teach them the same thing while using other paces; in fact, it would take so long a time to teach them to do it, that it would be time thrown away, when the least attention on the part of the rider renders it unnecessary. As so many men do not know how to readily change their advancing leg in a walk, how can we expect a horse to do it? and unless he does, he cannot possibly, at all times, turn short, either right or left, in a walk or trot.

It strikes me that some authors of instructions on different pursuits are a little too prone to expect their mere *ipse dixit* to be taken by the reader for the correctness of what is laid before him. They tell him he should or should not do a certain thing; this is merely laying down a rule, is all right enough, and probably it would be judicious in the reader to attend to it, but I consider he is fully entitled to be told *why* such rule is to be observed. When even this is done, it usually merely tells him (supposing the book to be on Horsemanship), that if he does or does not do such a thing, he will prevent his horse doing, or cause him to do so or so. Here, again, it would seem the author expects his *ipse dixit* to be taken, as in the first place. This is more than I think should be expected. If a rider is told the consequence of any procedure on his part, he ought to be shown, to the best of the author's ability, why such consequence must, or is likely to occur; unless such is done the author is dictating to, not advising his reader. If an author can in plain and familiar language express, or by analogous circumstances show, fair reasons, on which he offers his advice and gives his opinions, he will probably challenge more or less the attention of his reader; if, therefore, I sometimes, by way of analogical corroboration, bring forward circumstances, pursuits, and objects of quite a

different character from the matter in hand, I do it in the hope of rendering that matter more familiar to my reader, whose good judgment will then, by comparison, enable him to judge how far I am correct or not.

"I beg your pardon, my dear fellow; but upon my word I could not help it," said my friend, his horse coming against mine with the force of a moderate-sized vessel against the woodwork of a landing-pier. "Help it," said I laughing; "my knee tells me it was quite enough without further help from you; and that you could not stop it, when once begun, I am quite aware; but you might easily have prevented it taking place at all. I saw your horse was preparing to shy, so said nothing to you, for you might have thought I was mistaken in feeling certain and saying he would do so. Your horse did just what horses would do if preparing to start or shy: he pricked his ears forwards, and, looking towards a particular object, he raised his head and stiffened his neck; he also somewhat altered his walk—from an easy, steady, smooth step, he stepped lighter in a mitigated sort of march. Perhaps you merely thought he was carrying himself particularly handsomely at that moment; when the fact was, he was preparing himself to shy, start, or bolt, as his fears or inclination might urge him. But independ-

ently of this, a barrow decorated with children's flags flying is not met at every turn; and for your own safety take this as a rule—unless you are on a horse that you are quite certain will not start at any thing ever seen in a street,—whenever you see any thing out of the common way coming or overtaking you, get your horse in hand, if he was not so before, and watch his motions; if, on any thing coming towards you on the right, you find he is getting alarmed, pull his head gently towards the hedge, houses, or whatever is on your left, so as to let the object pass almost without his seeing it. Do this the moment you perceive his attention is fixed on the object, and before he becomes actually alarmed by it; for in the latter case he will either bolt round with you, or will be so terrified by it, that all hopes of diverting his attention from it are at an end; whereas, by beginning in time, by speaking to him, bearing on his mouth so as to turn his head, and pressing him on the same side you pull him to with your leg or heel, you at least divide his attention; and by so doing and encouraging him you prevent serious alarm taking place. Had you done this," said I to my friend, "when you saw the cargo of flags catching your horse's attention, you would have prevented his being quite alarmed, yourself all but capsized, and I nearly knocked into the kennel."

"If an object approaches from behind, act the same as if it was meeting you. Your horse does not see it till it is nearly by his side, but he hears it coming; the noise attracts his attention. Your first object then is as far as possible to attract that attention from it; and as any movement of the hand of the rider that actuates the bit is like 'attention' to the soldier, so it tells the horse he must prepare to do something; and this attracts his attention first; and the turning his head away from that which, if he hears approaching, will alarm him, prevents that alarm taking place, or, at all events, greatly diminishes it."

I have, in what I have said, supposed the rider to be in a fairly open space, such as a street or road of usual width, where the only usual effect of his horse's shying or starting is a sudden unpleasant movement to the rider; but there are situations where a horse doing such things really places the rider in very great peril. For instance: —

We will suppose a person to be riding in a narrow road on a horse he knows to be addicted to shying. If he sees any carriage coming at a slow pace, there is no danger to be apprehended; for if the driver possesses manners beyond those of a bear, he will, on seeing how matters stand, stop his vehicle. Supposing this to be done, the rider has only to encourage his horse; at the same time, soothingly urge him up to the side of the carriage; and when

there, if it can be done, let the rider stop him for a moment, which will afford the double advantage of giving him opportunity to acknowledge the courtesy of the driver, and will show the horse that he sustains neither hurt nor inconvenience by his vicinity to the object of his alarm. Such an occurrence, if accompanied by great encouragement on the part of the rider to his horse, would be so advantageous a lesson to him, that its good effects would be perceived, on the recurrence of a similar case, by the decreased alarm of the animal.

But we will now suppose the person placed in a very different situation in the same narrow lane, for a carriage turns a corner, and is within fifty yards of him, before rider or driver see each other. This is a most critical situation, and one really fraught with absolute peril to the rider, and he has not half a minute to decide on how to act. If he has reason to suppose his horse will become ungovernable by the rein, on coming close to the vehicle, or rather on that coming close to him, the risk would be too great to trust to the driver's pulling up, — for, in fact, he might not be able to do so in time to prevent an accident. In such a case, I beg to remind my reader of a saying he has often heard, — "in flight there is safety." This may not sound very heroic, perhaps; but however brave a man may be, or however properly cool when shot are flying about his ears,

if he sees a cannon-ball coming, he shows himself a fool instead of a hero, if he stands in its way; and if he jumps up, bobs aside, or ducks to avoid it, he is no worse soldier. He must not run away; but if he coolly marches on, he has done all that his honour or duty demands, though I have heard (but not seen) some fire-eaters, as soldiers, say they would act more heroically.

But as in such a case as I suppose to occur to my rider he has his safety, and not honour, to consult, I do advise him to run away, or rather cause himself to be carried away, and to do so in this manner. He finds, or thinks, the carriage cannot stop in time, and knows his horse will not go by it, but would turn round, and he and his rider get crushed by his doing so. Do not hesitate a second, nor give your horse the privilege of starting; wheel him round before he does so, and canter back to some place in the road where it is wide enough for the vehicle to go by without alarming your horse. He will not know why he is turned back; and as such a case might not recur in six months, there is no fear that he would become accustomed to turn back on seeing a carriage. He would very shortly learn to do so if permitted to do it of his own accord; but doing it by command of the rider on an emergency would no more bring on such habit, than if the being turned round at such a moment had arisen from the rider

just recollecting he had left something behind him, or had other reasons for turning suddenly back. In all our transactions with horses, it is the not permitting them to do things by the impulse of their own will that keeps them in subjection and prevents rebellion; and when this cannot be done, or it would be injudicious that it should be done by force, we must have recourse to stratagem, and deceive them into the conviction that they do nothing against our will; thus, if we find, or think we shall not be able to prevent a horse doing a something we see he is inclined to do, by forcibly making him do what he intended, he then in fact does so as an act of obedience, and not of rebellion.

There is another way in which a man may escape such a collision as the going forward would bring about, in such a situation as I have supposed a rider to be. If the fence on either side of the lane is a fair one, and you know your horse will not refuse, put his head at it, clap the spurs to him, and leave the whole lane to the carriage. Even should the fence be an awkward one, a roll over is better than being crushed by a carriage. But let me remind my reader he must, before he attempts this, be quite certain there is no baulk in his horse, which in such a case is a matter of much greater importance than his jumping safely, —an instance of which I will mention: —

I was, about seven years since, placed in a

similar situation to the one I suppose my rider to be in, when riding up a very narrow lane that leads to the Bar Beacon in Warwickshire. I was on a horse particularly shy of carriages. But here, had he not been so, the danger would have been the same; for in the centre of the lane I saw a large cart coming, with a horse, galloping and kicking, without a driver. To hesitate was probably death. My horse was a particularly fine timber jumper, and would refuse nothing his head was put to. A gate was close to me. I put him at it; but being a high one, the beat to it up hill, and very close to us, he could not quite clear it, but caught the top bar, I suppose, with his stifle: we rolled over into a field, and right glad I was to find myself "anyhow" out of the lane. — *Mem.* "I did not jump the gate back."

But we will suppose a man to be in a still worse situation, where there is no fence that can be jumped, gate that can be rolled over, and that he has not time to turn round, and get away. Such a situation is perhaps as truly dangerous a one as a rider can well be placed in, and is one where strong nerve, a strong hand, perfect coolness, and a knowledge of the effect of different acts of the rider on his horse alone can save him.

In all ordinary cases of passing, or being passed, by any object that alarms a horse, I have recommended the rider, as a general rule, to keep his

horse's head, and of course, in doing so, his eyes away from it; but we now come to a case where a diametrically opposite act must be adopted (for desperate cases call for desperate acts), that would be quite improper on other occasions.

We will suppose in a lane where there is just room enough for a carriage to pass a horse and his rider, and no more, that a turn in the road and the pace the vehicle comes at (say a carriage) brings the pole pieces level with the horse's shoulder before it can be avoided. There is no hoping that by turning his sight from an object so close he can be prevented seeing or being alarmed by it. He begins plunging, and his first impulse will be to turn round, which, in nine cases in ten, he attempts to do by turning *away* from the carriage. If permitted to do this, as he turns he is sure to be caught by it, and, as it were, doubled up, and crushed between the bank, wall, paling, or whatever fences in the lane, and the carriage. To prevent this, pull his head strongly up *to* the object, and clap your heel or spur, as he may require, to him on the same side. This sends his croup away from the object, and as much towards the fence to your left as the space will admit of; probably, feeling the heel or spur, he will rush on,—so much the better, provided you keep his head well to the right, for he will thus pass it in safety. If he does not do this, but re-

mains dancing or plunging, it will not matter, for so long as you keep his head well turned towards it, that will keep your knee and his quarters out of danger; and if the space is not sufficient to allow him to get much on the oblique, the spur to his right side, and the rein firmly held on that side also, will, at all events, keep him straight, which will be sufficient to prevent contact with the passing vehicle. But if the rider was to relax his hold of the right rein even for a second, the horse would bolt round to the left to a certainty, and then of course the collision would be awful.

The inexperienced rider might fear that by thus strongly pulling his horse towards the carriage he might cause him to bring his head or shoulder in contact with it: no fear of that, for he will pull as hard to the left to get away from it as the rider can to keep him up to it; and although he has not reasoning powers enough to reflect that by turning he must bring his croup against the carriage, he has quite sense enough to keep his head and shoulder far enough away from it to prevent either being struck. Such a situation is, no doubt, most critical, so is the mode of getting out of it; but it is the only one, or, at least, the only one I know of, and is a situation in which I have been often placed, and sometimes when on horses not to be trusted on such occasions; yet having escaped unhurt, I feel justified

in recommending to my readers what got me out of such scrapes.

To meet all contingencies, we will suppose that which very rarely indeed is the case. The horse is inclined to bolt round to the right, which he might attempt if not as yet quite alongside the coming vehicle. In such case the rider has only to prevent his doing so by steadily holding him hard with the left rein; but in this case he need not touch him with his right heel, for the horse, by attempting to turn to the right, will bring his croup quite sufficiently towards the left hand fence; so that, what between his keeping his croup in that direction, in his endeavours to turn to the right, and the rider pulling his fore parts to the left, he will, on the whole, be pretty near straight, which is all that is necessary.

Supposing a carriage to overtake the rider in a similar situation: if he has notice of its approach, his best plan is to go on in advance till he comes to some place where it can pass with safety to himself; if, however, it should get alongside him, he must do just the same as if he had met it; that is, keep his horse from turning round or throwing himself obliquely with his croup towards the passing object; so long as he can keep him straight, there is little chance of contact or danger.

In doing these things, and, in fact, most things, with a horse, the great nicety is knowing the

mouth and temperament of the animal, so as to regulate the hand and heel accordingly. Too rude a pull on a tender-mouthed one will confuse him, and prevent his acting as the rider wishes; and a too slight indication of the bit would be totally unheeded by a heavy-mouthed one. And so it is as regards the heel,—a pressure of the leg is sufficient for many horses; others will bear a kick with the heel; while, again, nothing but the rowel up to the head of the spur will rouse others to immediate and sudden exertion; and these indications and stimulants being sufficiently applied, but not overdone, show the horseman and insure his safety.

CHAPTER VIII.

BLUNDERING ON DARNED ROADS. — ON STUMBLING. — ITS CAUSES — AND CURES. — KEEPING A HORSE IN HAND. — HORSES ADDICTED TO TRIPPING. — COURSE TO BE ADOPTED. — CURIOUS ANALOGIES. — PREVENTION BETTER THAN CURE. — A FEW LESSONS IN ROTTEN ROW. — DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BLUNDERING AND TRIPPING ILLUSTRATED.

THERE is a mode of keeping our present roads in order, that I have heard termed "darning" them; this is, if a part is seen somewhat lower than the general surface, the unbroken pieces of granite are got up to it, and there left to be crushed by the wheels of carriages passing over them. The under stratum of ground is left hard; so these three, four, or five cornered pieces of stone are left to be trodden on by the first or any horse that is obliged to go over them. The hardness of the under surface prevents their sinking with any weight on them, so a horse might, in fact, as well tread on an iron peg fixed and left an inch or two high. Let the rider, above all abominations as to ground, avoid a piece that has been thus darned; for unless the sole of his horse's foot is as hard as the granite itself, the chances are, if he is not exceedingly on the alert and quick on his legs, that he comes on his nose,

though on all other occasions as safe as a cat on a carpet. Not to wince from the pain the pressure on such a surface occasions is impossible; and if after doing so he keeps on his legs, all the credit he gets is being accused of having made a stumble, and perhaps a blow is the reward he gets for his activity in not, as a dull horse would have done, coming down headlong.

If a portion of road is covered by cart-load upon cart-load of broken granite, perhaps six inches deep, this may be traversed by a sound horse with impunity, for the mass will yield with his weight. He will step on it as they say "a cat" does "on a hot griddle;" but his stepping short does not arise from his feet being actually bruised, but to insure his safety on an unequal and unsteady surface. It would injure a horse's feet less to gallop him a mile on such a bed of accumulated stones, than it would to walk him a quarter of the distance where the stones lay singly on a hard under stratum.

I was led into making the foregoing remarks from being aware that as many accidents happen to inexperienced horsemen from not knowing where danger lies in things with which their horse has nothing to do, as from the different acts of the animal or themselves; and one of these darned roads led, the next time my friend and I rode out together, to a conversation on stumbling.

On his horse making a false step, he gave him a stroke with his stick, and in a somewhat stentorian voice bid him "hold up." Whether my friend did this to show how resolute a horseman he had become, and his proficiency in stable terms, or thought that what he did would prevent his horse wincing when hurt, I know not; but it set him curvetting about in a way that I could plainly see would insure his not being struck while he continued doing so, for my friend had occasion for all the hands he had for his bridle, and would have wanted a third if he wished to strike his horse.

"Pray," said I, "do you hold a stripe on the shoulder to be a sovereign preventive to a horse wincing when hurt?" "Certainly not," replied my friend; "but my horse was not hurt; he made a stumble, and I hit him to make him more careful in future." "Come," said I, "we will investigate this a little. In the first place, how do you know he was not hurt? Did you see what occasioned his making, not what you call a stumble, not even a false step, but merely an unequal one? Pray did you ever with your bare foot tread on a pin or nail?" "Yes, indeed I have," replied my friend. "And, I dare say," said I, "were glad enough to catch your foot up and clap the other down. Now, your horse did just the same thing; he trod on a sharp stone, and

very cleverly (instead of rolling down, which a sluggish, heavy brute would have done) he quickly brought his other foot to his support; and for doing this you have corrected him, the chief effect of which is that it is lesson the first towards teaching him, when the next time he makes a failing step, which he cannot avoid, to turn his attention to the fear of being beat, instead of to the saving himself and perhaps you a fall. Striking a horse for making a false step, stumble, or blunder is, as you will see on reflection, one of the most absurd acts a rider can be guilty of, can possibly do no good, and is certain to do harm. It is as useless as it would be for a man to dodge after he hears the report of a gun pointed at him; if he is unhurt, he need not move, — if wounded, the mischief was done before he heard the report: so with respect to a horse stumbling, — he is either on his nose or all right again before the rider can hit him. But suppose he was not, hitting him would distract his attention from recovering himself, and induce him, instead of throwing up his fore parts, to blunder forwards too far to save himself."

Let the rider call to his reflection the causes of stumbling; he will then judge how far correction will remedy these. The usual causes are infirmity, peculiar formation, gait, indolence, and bad roads.

If he blunders from weakness or infirmity, a blow with the stick will not render the infirmity less. Keeping such a horse a little on his mettle will in many cases make him go safely to a certain extent, — that is, it may, by preventing him dwelling long on either weak limb, also prevent it giving way under the weight imposed on it; but hitting him when it has so given way, as to cause a stumble, cannot recall the stumble, but will very probably increase its effects.

If blundering arises from formation, no stick or spurs, apply them when you will, can alter that; and if from formation the horse cannot put his foot fairly on the ground, blunder he will and must; he cannot help it, — so how can correction do any good in this case?

When arising from gait, correction with the whip or stick, when he stumbles, will not alter gait; but the hands, with the whip and spurs as aids, may, if properly used, when he is *not* stumbling. Correcting the cause may do a great deal of good; but correcting, or rather punishing, the animal will not prevent or remedy the effect, which is stumbling; therefore can do none.

Should he blunder from sheer indolence, correct the indolence as much as you please. If he will not be roused to energy, or, at all events, to quick motions, from a switch, lay a tough ash plant about him; and if a touch of the spurs will not

stimulate, give him a pair of good new rowels, and they will, by making so lazy a brute move more quickly, make him move more safely. We often find unsafe horses tolerably the reverse in their fast paces. Why is this? If we make a lazy horse trot three miles in twelve or fifteen minutes he *must* move his legs quickly; this causes such horses going more safely in fast paces: if they would also step quickly in their slower paces, they would be safe in them. If a horse will walk cheerfully four miles and a half an hour, we generally find him as safe in a walk as a trot. The lazy horse has not energy enough to do this, nor are pains enough taken with him in his walk to make him do it; he must when the whip and spurs force him into a fast trot. But no longer pipe no longer dance; and as these cease so soon as he is allowed to walk, all his energy ceases also, and then he blunders again, — and so he will as long as he is a horse.

Bad roads will make the safest horse trip occasionally, perhaps frequently; and in such cases riders are apt to do what renders the matter worse. They hold their horse tight in hand; the effect of which is, it prevents all freedom to his action, and the making use of that instinct nature has endowed him with in picking his way with safety. It is a very common thing to see a horse blunder into a rut when his

rider makes him cross it at an injudicious moment; but if a horse voluntarily crosses it, I would back him at a hundred to one that he does it safely. If, from there being no place where he can place his foot securely down, the horse falters in doing it, what good can result from tugging at the mouth of the animal because the foot-hold is bad? and if he has not sense enough to put his feet on safe ground, if there is any, holding his head tight will not put sense in it; and striking him for tripping on such occasions is worse still, for that will neither mend the roads nor give him instinct, though it may frighten what little he has out of him.

There is yet another and very frequent cause for a horse tripping, blundering, or even falling — which is fatigue. In this case, striking him for doing what he cannot avoid is absolute cruelty and injustice, and, as on all other occasions done, when he *has* tripped or blundered, is perfectly useless. No doubt the whip and spur, plied when he is not blundering, force the poor brute to increased action, and from that probably prevent his tripping as often as he might otherwise do; but to ride a willing, good horse till he requires this, is so unjustifiable, that if I knew anything that would save such a rider a severe fall I should glory in concealing it from him! What to do with a tired horse I may mention on another

occasion: here I merely say, if he blunders, don't strike him.

What I had been saying respecting not holding a horse tight in ground difficult to travel over induced my friend to ask me, if a horse was to be allowed to go at liberty, what was meant by keeping a horse in hand.

This is an expression quite calculated to mislead the uninitiated in such matters, as numberless terms and expressions used in most pursuits are. It is, however, a perfectly explicit one to a horseman; for instance, suppose I put a person on a horse that was a little careless in his paces, and from that was apt to make a false step occasionally, or, being a little shy, would be disposed to turn round or bolt on one side, I should say, "he is a little careless in his walk, — so just keep him in hand a little." Or, to use another technical expression, "keep your hand on him;" or, in using the same terms, I should say, "he is a little shy." A horseman would at once know what I meant. A bystander, who was not one, on seeing this person ride off, and having heard my caution to him, would be very much surprised to see him let the horse walk off with a comparatively loose rein; for were this bystander in the other's place, and similarly cautioned, he would screw up the horse's head as if he had both a bearing and gag rein on. He does not see that, by the position of the horse-

man's hands, he has the horse most perfectly in hand; that is, his hands are in such a position, in accordance with the length of rein he allows the horse, that though he merely just feels his mouth, and by this allows him full freedom of action, he can in one second bring the bit to bear on the horse in its full force; and though he may be riding by the side of a friend, in conversation, and seem to be paying no attention to his horse, his eye is on him, and his hand also. By his seemingly careless hold of his horse's head, he keeps his mouth alive, prevents his hanging heavy or boring on the hand, and by these means feels every indication of the horse's mouth on his hand, and keeps the horse, or rather keeps his mouth, in that state that renders both sensible to any influence of the hand of the rider; and easy, or even careless as such a horseman may appear to be, let his horse make the slightest attempt at a turn, bolt, or trip, it would be seen he would be on his bit, and more or less on his haunches, by an almost invisible movement of the rider's hands. And here, while on the subject of "keep a horse in hand," I will endeavour to show where, in case of stumbling, the rider's hand may prevent a catastrophe that it cannot remedy; and I must, in doing this, revert to tripping and stumbling. When I was on that subject, in the last two or three pages, it was in allusion to correcting a horse for it. Here we are

on the subject of preventing his doing it, or checking its effects if he does.

Tripping is a habit or fault common to multitudes of horses who are nevertheless perfectly safe. It usually arises from striking the toe against some surface; and a horse well on his haunches may do this *ad infinitum* without once being in danger of coming down. He would, naturally enough, alarm a person not used to ride him, for he would not know how far it might go; and even supposing a stranger to be riding such a horse in company with his master, though the latter might say, "Don't pull him about,—he is quite safe," a man must be an experienced horseman, a good judge of what is or is not unsafe, and must also have a good opinion of the owner's judgment, to feel confidence on such a horse.

The rider may be quite sure that a horse of any spirit has as great an objection to falling as his rider has to his doing so; and the quick way in which such horses catch themselves up, if they make a mistake or unavoidable stumble, shows that such is the case. Now a trip merely occasions a horse to bring the foot that he has not tripped with sooner to the ground than he would have done had he carried the tripping foot forward to its regular length of step, be that more or less;—something has stopped it in its progress, so instead of putting it forward, say fourteen inches, it is

stopped at ten. This produces a somewhat unpleasant sensation to the rider, and an unequal step in the horse. This is a trip: if the horse is light and airy, he catches himself up; and, as the more spirited he is the more quickly and energetically will he do so, this very often leads an inexperienced horseman into the belief that he has narrowly escaped a most serious fall, when, in fact, it is only the spirit and activity of the horse that have induced him to make a considerable effort to remedy a very inconsiderable mistake, and one that a more indolent horse, not noticing himself, would scarcely have been noticed by the rider. It will therefore be clear that, with a horse who has spirit enough to do of his own accord all that we could make or wish him to do if he does make a trip, any check on his mouth would only confuse him, and could possibly do no good; and if a horse happens to be at all "a loose-necked one," — that is, one inclined to throw up his head on any strong pull on his mouth, — we can do no good by checking such a horse, however bad a blunder he may make; but by doing so the rider would run great risk of bringing his horse's head in contact with his own; and should this happen to any one who does me the honour of reading my books and papers, the least grateful return I can make him, is a perfect conviction that his head would suffer the most severely by the collision!

I have generally found (singular as the assertion may at first appear to the reader) that very light-hearted, cheerful horses are more apt to make trifling mistakes, or trips, than more steady and methodical steppers; and the reason they may do so I take to be this—such horses are constantly looking about them; the least thing attracts their attention; and if that is fixed on different objects, it is called from looking at the road, or where they are going; so they come in contact with inequalities, stones, and so forth, on the ground, that the more staid, sober, and plodding goer carefully avoids.

I had one of these light-hearted, mercurial sort, who was so careless in his choice of ground in his walk that he would trip twenty times in a mile, but he was always too much on the alert to let the trip generate into a stumble. If he made a trip he was up in a second, as if his feet had touched iron at a white heat. But, as I said before, speaking of such horses, it required knowing him well to feel perfect confidence in a horse that did such things. And he had other peculiarities that did not suit every man. In proof of which:—

A friend, a capital sportsman and horseman, but many years older than myself, came to spend a couple of days with me. The second day I mounted him on a very good and particularly steady, perfect horse as a hunter. He carried my

friend well; and well and straight he rode him. I rode my favourite, the tripper. My friend wanted a horse. I recommended the one he had ridden. "He liked him, but he was too big" (he certainly was a big one,—sixteen two, good); he must have the one I had ridden. I told him he would not like him; told him of his heedless way of walking; that he went freer at his fences than he would like; and, to crown all, if he let his mouth get at all dead, he would go away with him to a certainty. But it would not do; have him he must; and he bought him at a price, he told me, that was nearly double to that he had usually given for horses.

A month afterwards I called on my friend at his town house. "Well! how goes on the horse?" —"Oh, well enough, for all I know; he is in Yorkshire. I ought to have taken your advice, and bought the other; he *was* a hunter." "So was the one you bought," said I, "and, I think, could go as fast and do as much in the field as any horse in England." "He was a devil untied," said my friend. "But what did he do?" I replied. "Do!" said he: "in the first place, I thought he would have been on his nose twenty times, riding him three miles to meet the Derby. On the hounds going off, the second fence I came to, when I got near it, I would not have ridden at it for a hundred pounds; but his head being to it, I

might as well have attempted to stop a tornado as him; and when he came to it, instead of taking it at twice, which I thought was as much as most horses could do, he took it altogether in a swing, till I thought I should never come to the ground again. To finish, the brute pulled till my arms could not hold him, and away he went. The hounds came to a check, luckily very soon, or I suppose we should have been going at this minute. I had had quite enough of him, and sold him to go into Yorkshire." "I hope you did not lose money by him?" I said. "No, I did not," replied my friend; "but I lost all the skin between my fingers, and two days' hunting, from being unable to hold my reins."

Now, this horse I always rode in a plain, moderate-sized Pelham, and could always hold him with perfect comfort, though, as my friend found, not if he saw a large fence before him, was going fast at it, and he had got within three or four strides of it; but so much for horse and man being accustomed to each other.

In riding a horse inclined to trip, and supposing he is not on the alert enough to catch himself up immediately, the rider, by having him in hand, can generally make him do so, and assist, or, I would rather say impel him, in the doing it. But to effect this, the hand of the rider must be as quick as the horse ought to be; he must not wait

till he feels the horse coming on the bit, from his fore parts being impelled forward by the contact of his foot with an obstacle; for then it is too late: but if, the instant the rider feels the concussion occasioned by the foot striking, he catches his horse's head, he induces him to give that upward lift of his fore parts that stops their forward preponderance; and, this checked, all is safe. This, if a man has not his horse in hand, he cannot do; for the pull most riders are seen to give when a horse blunders comes so late, that it is of no more use than if they had a cord to a heavy loaded coach after it had got over far enough to be beyond its equilibrium — the strength of a man, at the critical moment, would have prevented its coming to this; but that moment passed, and the balance lost, twenty men would not stop three tons going over in full swing. Nor could a man's arms hold up a few hundred-weight of bone and horse flesh going down in full swing either; though, under such circumstances, should the horse, by great exertion, save *himself*, the rider will set the result down to the pulling and hauling he gave the mouth of his horse, when, in nine cases out of ten, when matters, or rather the horse, had progressed thus far towards the ground, the hauling tended to counteract the efforts of the animal to save his knees and nose. By way of analogy —

Suppose our horse gets into a bog, and we hold

his head fast by the bridle, he will make energetic efforts to get it at liberty, that he may have full freedom of his fore parts to scramble out as best he may. Now, let us further suppose a horse in harness, with a bearing-rein on, to get into such a scrape; unless the rein and bearing-hook were of most unusual strength, we should find he would soon snap the one or the other. This shows how necessary freedom of the head and neck is to a struggling horse. If the rider, with a bogged horse, was to pertinaciously hold these confined, the chances are, his horse, by his struggles in the same place, would sink himself deeper and deeper; loose his head, he struggles and plunges forward, and gets out. This exertion is quite enough, without its being increased by struggling also against the rider's hand. It is all very well if the rider, like a jockey when he "sets to" to finish a race, gets his arms up, and *supports* his horse's head; but supporting and confining are widely different in their effect; — the one counteracts; the other, to a certain degree, assists the animal in his efforts.

Now, a horse struggling to save himself when coming nearly on his knees is somewhat similarly situated to the horse in the bog, and would be equally prevented using his best efforts to save himself if controlled in the freedom of his head.

A person may ask, In what way can the

liberty of putting his head down facilitate his efforts to rise, which is wanted of him? This is a question I am not prepared to answer in a satisfactory way; but I can only say, it does. There is some sympathy between the motions of the head and neck and limbs of the horse that we, or at least I, cannot either explain or account for; but the freedom of the first is unquestionably necessary to the action of the other in struggling.

Most persons have often seen horses fall in harness in the street. The moment it is proper to permit the horse to use his exertions to rise, the first thing a man who knows what he is about does is to loose the bearing-rein. If this is not done, unless it has been broken, the animal would find the utmost difficulty in rising, if he could do so at all. Now, it might be supposed that, as the horse wants to rise, his head being supported by the bearing-rein would assist him in doing so; but experience, and indeed, on reflection, reason, tells us it has the opposite effect. A man taking the horse by the head and supporting it does assist him, because he supports it, but does not confine it, which the bearing-rein does. This exemplifies what I have said is the difference between the rider confining or supporting his horse in difficulties.

It might be asked, How do I account for a race-horse going at nearly his best pace, hard held, if

confining the head prevents freedom of action in the horse? This is to be answered in the following way: —

We do *not confine* the head of the racehorse by pulling at him, at least not as the *primum mobile* of the act. The horse pulls at us; and we only pull at him to prevent his making too free with himself, that is, with his powers of going. He would go faster if only supported, but not held; and it is to prevent his doing so he is held. And it must be borne in mind, that a horse galloping goes with an even uniform stroke, to do which a raised position of the head and neck is not necessary; but in the last few strides, where sudden and increased exertion is called for, and the horse is, in technical phrase, "called upon," if the contest is a severe one, it does become necessary to give him, to a certain degree, his freedom of head. It is then only supported, not confined.

The harness horse can trot along the road borne up by the bearing-rein, and fast trotters can go their best when hardest held; they, like the racehorse, do not want absolute freedom of head to do a uniform act. But the horse near falling, or the horse in a bog, wants to make raised and sudden exertion; in doing which, they will be seen, if permitted to do so, to make raised and sudden movements of the head and fore parts;

and for this, absolute freedon of all these is necessary.

The great distinction between tripping and blundering is not so much in the act itself, as it is in the way in which it affects the horse, or the horse is affected by it. Supposing a horse was well on his haunches, light in his forehand, and, above all, light in his heart, he might play at bowls, if he pleased, with cannon balls; and I should have no fear of riding him during his game. He would not come down; he might bruise his toes a bit, no doubt; but each time he struck a ball, he would fling himself up and on his haunches; and while he did that, if he hopped a step or two on three legs, he would make no absolute blunder. Mere tripping in his going is by no means so serious an objection to a horse as many people hold it to be. If they are as particular as regards any trips of their own, they are of no ordinary sort of men.

Blundering is more the effect of shape, carriage, and disposition of the horse than any thing else. Many people consider a trip to arise from the horse meeting a trifling obstruction, or striking an obstruction lightly, and hold a blunder to be occasioned by a more important obstruction, or the horse hitting it with greater force. This is sometimes the case, but not so in a general way.

Blundering chiefly arises from the body of the horse having a forward preponderance, so that

when he trips it occasions him very strenuous exertion to prevent its balance being overpoised; if it becomes so, down he comes.

The celebrated leaning towers we read and see drawings of, stand perfectly secure as *they are*, but a slight lever to their base would send them toppling over; whereas a hundred such levers to a perpendicular one, if applied to its base, even if it was moved by it, it would not fall: take away the levers, it would right itself; but once give motion to the other, down it irretrievably goes. This is really analogous to the distinction between a trip and a blunder, and also between an habitually blundering or merely tripping horse. The first is the leaning tower, the last the perpendicular one.

But I will enable my reader in his own person to test the correctness of what I say, as to form and position of the body of the horse causing the difference between dangerous blundering and mere unpleasant tripping, more than the mere obstruction his foot meets with.

Find a particularly uneven piece of turf, with sudden and frequent little inequalities in it, as we often see on a common; shut your eyes, lean forward as if walking up a very steep hill, and walk on; I will answer for it you are on your nose in a hundred yards. Nor will you be able to save yourself; for the forward tendency of the body

will, on the foot striking against a rise or being put into a hole, bring you down before you can make an effort to save yourself; and once out of equilibrium, if you blunder on a step or two before you come down, it is not once in ten times you will be able to save yourself. To make this more convincing, let a cord be fastened to each arm, and give that to a boy of say eight years old, to hold behind you as a pair of reins. When you have once overbalanced, you will, in blundering forward, pull the reins out of the boy's hand, or, if he hold firmly, he will be pulled down; but he will not be able to pull you up; and you would find the more he, by holding hard, confined your arms, the less effort could you make to save yourself. Here you are the blundering horse.

Now change the case. Hold yourself perfectly upright; walk with a light step over the same ground. Your foot strikes something; the moment it does, you give a kind of jump upwards, and the foot that has not struck the obstacle instantly supports you. And supposing, before this is done, the concussion has thrown you a little forward, a check from a much weaker boy on the reins on your arms brings you back to the perpendicular, merely because your deviation from it has been trifling. In figurative terms, by walking upright you are "on your haunches." Here you are the mere tripping horse.

But to adduce another analogous illustration between man and horse, and having said I have found cheerful, light-hearted horses more prone to mere tripping than the more plodding goer, we will see how men are affected in the same particular.

A ploughman is walking home in his heavy stooping way, thinking a great deal of nothing at all (but perhaps his supper), and though walking amidst the most lovely scenery nature can exhibit, paying no more attention to it than he would to a bare heath. He keeps his eyes on the path, and from that rarely makes a trip or false step. So far so good; he is the safest horse. But if, from taking his eyes off the path or any other cause, he does make a trip, with him it becomes a blunder, —down he comes, and on getting up exclaims, "By Goom, I bleeve I've broak my noose." Where is the safe horse now, though he does not often trip? but once is enough.

An intelligent cheerful man walks along, looking on all sides at the treat nature has afforded by the same scenery our "Ghee-who" friend disregarded. The admiring traveller is more attentive to what he sees, and the reflections it gives rise to, than his path. He hits things on it with his foot repeatedly. At last he hits something that makes him wince again; he hops a step or two on

one foot, and exclaims, "Confound that stone, how sharp it was!" but he does not fall.

My reader may mount which of the two persons he thinks the best of; for my own riding, I should prefer the tripping gentleman for a hack.

My friend laughed at my transformation of men into horses, but paid me the compliment of saying that my similes and analogies made him fully understand what he wished to know. I sincerely trust that they may have the same effect upon those who con over my pages.

Meeting him again, he had his knee bandaged; and on my inquiring the cause, he said his horse shied and ran him against a wall. "I am afraid," said I, "you have forgotten the flags and the barrow we lately met." "No, I have not," replied my friend; "but a dog rushing out of a shop I could not look for." "I cannot let you off so easily," said I; "where were your hands?" "Why, the fact is, my horse was too quick for me." "And you too slow for him?" "I believe you are right," good-humouredly said my friend; "but supposing I had been quicker, what should I have done to prevent the accident?" "I will tell you," said I. "If you ever find your horse likely to run you against a wall, or anything else, pull his head to it; he cannot then place himself sideways to it. In the first place, he will not go near enough to it to let his nose get a rasping by it, even if you

wished it, and that he must do if his head is brought sufficiently round before he reaches it; thus your knee is kept at least a foot from it. Should he fight with you, and resist the bit in order to get alongside, supposing it to be your right, clap your spur to his off side; if he still persists, snatch at his mouth severely with your right hand, and stick the rowel into him in earnest: not one in a thousand will stand this. If it is a ditch, do the same thing; he might back into a deep one, but he won't walk into it, unless there is no danger, — and in that case it matters little whether he does or not.

"The same thing should be done if a horse tries to back on to the foot pavement of a street — keep his head to it. Should he, by your doing so, walk on to it, and a passing vehicle be dangerously near, it is as safe a measure as you could adopt when in such danger, for then you have only to let him alone, and he will walk off again. You need not fear his slipping, if you do not frighten or flurry him when on. But if a horse backs on to it, the chances are he comes down, and for this reason — in backing, his hind legs are of course much under him; they slip, and for a moment he gets into the position of a dog sitting, and then rolls over on one of his sides; or should he struggle to right himself, having no foothold, he is sure to slip in some direction or

other, probably a very dangerous one to the rider: therefore, on no occasion, if it can by any possibility be avoided, allow your horse to back on to pavement or any other slippery surface. But if he has done so, be perfectly quiet till he gets off of it."

"Well," said my friend, "I think I shall now be a match for my horse if he again attempts the same thing he did as to getting me against a wall; but now I want a wrinkle or two given me under the circumstances of a horse wanting to go any particular road that I do not wish to go."

"In such a case," said I, "*you* must be very particular that he does not do it; for if he does, he will very probably ever afterwards insist on going wherever he likes, which you would probably not like."

Before a man undertakes to contend with a wilful horse, he must consider whether he is in a situation to do so; and, if not, whether he can make his cunning counteract that of the animal; to do which he must be thoroughly conversant with the manœuvres the animal is likely to put in practice; otherwise the rider will be beat by his horse even at this game. If it is a case where such proceeding will not avail, and force to force must be brought into play, the rider should assure himself how far he possesses nerve, strength, seat, and proper appliances for the contest. If he

is not quite certain of possessing these, leave the battle to be waged by some one who has, or your horse will be spoiled.

There is one very mistaken plan that many persons go upon to cure a horse of any bad habit, — which is, to place him purposely in a situation that they are certain will call this bad habit into play; and this they do to have the opportunity, as they hope, of correcting it. This is a very bad practice; one that, in the long run, gives the most trouble, is attended with the most danger, and frequently leads to, and ends in, the person practising it being beat in the contest.

I have no doubt but the reader will agree with me, that if we can correct a bad habit in any animal by moderate coercion and moderate correction it is far preferable to doing so by brute force or brutal chastisement, which in the plan I deprecate is most commonly contemplated, and by the plan sometimes eventually rendered necessary. But I must again have recourse to elucidating what I mean by analogy; the reader will then understand what I am at, relative to this subject.

I suppose myself to have a dog addicted to chasing sheep. He must be cured of that. If I depute a servant to do this, I know how he will set about it. He will take the dog on to a common, where sheep are running at large. The moment they see the dog, they begin running. This is just

what the man wished they might do. The dog of course immediately sets off after them, and the man after the dog. Probably after the latter has ceased chasing, he is caught; and at a moment when he is not in fault he is most brutally thrashed, knowing or not knowing what he is thrashed for. He is cowed for the day, and sore for three or four afterwards, when he forgets the beating; and the next time he sees the sheep, he feels the same excitement and propensity, and away he goes after them; so probably it would be so long as he lives.

I now take the dog in hand, and as sedulously avoid taking him where he has a chance of seeing sheep running as the other sought for a place where he should; for I know, with his present habits the temptation will be too strong for the dog to resist. I put a collar round his neck, with a cord to hold him by, and a good dog whip in my hand. I take him to a sheepfold: here the sheep cannot run; and not being wild, the utmost they will do, on seeing the dog, is to huddle all together. On entering the fold, I cry in a warning voice, "Ware sheep, Don." The dog looks up. "Ware sheep," I cry again. If he appears in the least elated or fidgety, "Ware sheep," I cry in a voice of anger. If he attempts to make any hasty advance towards them, a smart stroke or two of the whip make him find "ware sheep" must be attended to. If after this he pulls to-

wards or jumps at them, I give him a good flogging: he deserves it, for he knows he is doing wrong, and has not over-excitement as an excuse. In a day or two, more or less, as he is more or less corrigible, he will cease not only to jump at the sheep, but will walk quietly among them. He has learned perfectly one lesson, which is, that he must not touch sheep standing still. Probably being now cowed by the warning, "ware sheep," if I took him on the common, he would, if he saw sheep running, stop at being hallooed to (if not too far off); but it would be highly injudicious to trust him, for if he broke away, my three or four days' lesson would go for nothing—he would be nearly as bad as ever.

I now take him where sheep are wild, but not even yet near enough to set them running. But suppose they were to do so, I am prepared, for I have him in a cord of some twenty yards long. This length gives him something of a feeling of liberty. If he looks towards the flock, "ware sheep" reminds him of his lessons. In a day or two, I approach them; they begin to run; Don gets fidgety, but the warning, and showing him the whip, most probably controls him: if it does not, and he breaks away, I let him reach the end of the cord, and with a stentorian "ware sheep" I pull him head over heels, pull him up, and, getting hold of him, give him a second thrashing

A lesson or two more, and he, in nine cases in ten, will be broke of the habit. But if, without the cord to check him, he had got in full career, flaying the poor brute alive would not have prevented his doing it again; but his propensity having been diminished gradually, moderate correction will reform him, which it would not have done while that propensity was in full force.

On the same principle, it is advisable to begin breaking a horse of a habit by keeping him out of situations where that habit is sure to be shown; for instance, your horse is disposed to go the road he pleases to go, when you wish him to go another. Now, if you had an engagement at a certain place, it would be very injudicious to take such a horse to carry you to fulfil it; for in so doing, at some turn or other, you would put him in disposition to rebel, without being, perhaps, in a situation to dispute with him, much less overcome him; and to seek occasion to ensure his propensity to rebellion would be equally unwise, till something had been done to mitigate that inclination.

It may be truly said, unless a contest takes place, victory cannot take place either: granted; but he is a bad general who volunteers an engagement in an unfavourable position; and if, by a little delay, victory can be obtained at diminished loss of life to the victors, it is bad judgment,

not bravery, if he does not avail himself of such circumstance.

We will say a horse has the very bad habit of resisting the wishes of the rider, in taking every left or right turn he comes to, and resists violently when opposed. The rider's horse, we will suppose, bolts round every left-hand one, and fights against the bit if turned towards the right. If a rough rider chooses to try and cure the horse of this habit by brute force, let him do so. He will, perhaps, restrain the horse and prevent the act, or he may not; but if he does, he does not cure him of the propensity or wish to do it. But we are not on the subject of colt-breaking, or absolute restive horse-breaking, but on that of familiar advice to a young rider, and putting him, or hoping to put him, in the best mode of riding and managing his horse, not breaking him; and in speaking of bad habits of the animal, it is only supposing them to be such to an extent that a little management will overcome and perhaps eradicate.

With a horse disposed, as we say, to be violent to a degree that puzzles or intimidates a young horseman, if he is wanted to turn to the right, I should say, while he has this habit on him in full force, do not attempt to turn him forcibly the contrary way to his wishes, but ride him when and where you have no fixed route you wish to

take. We will say, therefore, that you ride for a few days solely to cure a horse you like of a bad habit you have found him to possess, and in such a case it is time very well bestowed.

Take your horse into Rotten Row — as good a place as any to have a contest, if one should be necessary. It is wide, fenced in: the ground affords the best of foot-hold, and is neither hard, or, of course, slippy; so, if a man selects an hour when scarce any one is there, I could not wish a better breaking ground than Hyde Park. Many a gallop have I given my horses on the enclosed part of it, when the turf was in good order. It is true, I have heard a keeper's halloo, but that was of no consequence. I got my "spin," and the horse that jumped in also jumped out, where no keeper was by. Should a man be recognised afterwards, and accused of such a breach of regulations, swear roundly it was not you, though it might be somebody like you. Get the accuser to alter your curb chain, and give him five shillings for doing it. I do not say I did so; but as I frequently got my gallop, the reader may infer what he pleases.

I should be sorry to introduce any proceedings contrary to ranger regulations: but if a man disguised his person so as not to be known, a breathing of a fine morning on the turf of the park, hunted by half a dozen green coats and as many

blue ones, really is, in fun and excitement, next to a burst with hounds; and the hurrah and bravos of any spectators, when you take your departing tilt over the rails, is a little bit of triumph worth having; and those who know the thoroughly kind heart of the royal ranger will feel quite certain, could he see the chase and escape, he would enjoy it as much as any man living.

Having your horse in a safe schooling ground, remember your object is to make him obedient to the hand and rein in turning as the rider wishes. We will say the particular horse brought to be schooled fights against turning to the right, that is, taking a turning that leads that way. We will not investigate his motives, for, be they what they may, he must be taught to obey. Now, there being no turning for a long way up the Row, he would most probably not care whether he crossed the wide space of it obliquely to the right or left; make him do this both ways, but be particular that he obeys quickly when you cross to the right. Supposing he does not absolutely resist, but hangs a little on being pressed by the bit to the right side, give him a sharp pull; if he does not instantly obey that, give him a stripe with your cane or ash plant on the near side of his nose, or on his near shoulder, speaking sharp to him. On this making him go as directed, when he does so, caress him, and speak to him, as,

"That's good, lad," "good man, good man," patting him and bearing on the right rein all the time. While doing this, press stronger and stronger, thus getting him more and more directly across; if you find him quite amenable, still caressing him, turn him quite round and let him stand.

Now, in resuming your way up, do not as yet attempt to turn him round to the right, for he might resist, as it would be going away from home, or the part he entered the Park, which he knows leads there; but turn him to the left, speaking to him as you motion him to move by the pressure of the bit and indication of the leg or heel. Do this encouragingly, as "Come, good man;" "Come, good lad;" "Come, my man," or something in this way. Repeat this manœuvre often enough during your ride, to show your horse what you mean him to do, and that you will be obeyed, without, however, overdoing it, so as to irritate him. In returning home, make your route there one that will not require disputes about right hand turnings, and this, by a little circuition can always be done.

The day's lesson has taught your horse that obeying your wish brings encouragement, and rebellion brings chastisement,—two of the fundamental principles of inculcating both instruction and good conduct in biped and quadruped. Had

you done this in a situation where the temptation to resist had been strong, probably he would have got the better of you.

It would greatly exceed the limits I have laid down for myself in this book if I was to follow the every day's tuition it might be necessary for a rider to give a horse to cure him of any habit: for some two days would suffice; for others as many weeks would barely produce the same effect, dependent on the quickness or obtusity of apprehension in the animal, and also on the tractability or intractability of his nature; I must therefore push on the the supposed present tuition as fast as I can consistent with probable results.

The next day take your horse again to the same school and repeat his lessons. The chances are greatly in your favour that he will be much more ready in his compliance than before; and now, being sure that he perfectly understands the indications you give him, if he does not comply readily, it is obstinacy and open rebellion. If you find he at all fights against you on the disputed point of inclining to the right, stand now on no ceremony with him; pull your right rein tight into your left hand, give him a stripe or two on the left shoulder, ditto, if that does not do, on the left side of his nose, and cram the right spur into his side. He must come round. He may plunge; if he does you are now in for a contest, and must

go through with it. Sit tight, and lay your ash plant well into his ears. This will give him something else to think about (for nothing is more sensitive than the ears); he cannot go to the left from your having him tight held. He will become astonished and not know what to do; you will find him stop his gambols and shake his ears. Now sit quiet, calling to him in an angry tone, "Who ho, then!" "What are you at, eh?" "Who ho!" When he is quite quiet, gently turn him, or rather give him an indication to turn to the right, not forgetting to speak to him, as "Come along!" or "Come round!" If he hesitates, raise your stick, crying loudly, "Would you, eh?" The chances are, seeing the stick, he not only wheels as you wish, but shoots round to the right to avoid the threatened blow. When he does, let him go, saying, "Good lad!" "good lad!" "gently!" "who ho!" and caress him.

I should say you may now venture as far as the garden wall. Here is a turn to the right, but not a sharp one, or one that he can, we may suppose, have any reason to object to take. Make a circuitous turn to it, which the wide space will allow you to do. All the time you are thus wheeling to the right caress your horse. After passing the bridge you have another turn. This leads towards home, and doubtless your horse will readily take it, and you arrive near the Achilles.

Now an impatient man, and a bad judge of horses' tempers, might be disposed to see how far he had conquered his horse, by trying if he would turn up Rotten Row again. Do no such thing. It is, in the first place, a short turn to the right, which he dislikes, and it leads from home, which, depend on it, he very well knows; so he would very probably resist you; for though horses do not mind going from home, they have a great dislike to going again over ground that has taken them from it.

The reason why it is always judicious, in attempting to cure a horse of any vice or habit, to take him where we suppose he has the least inducement to show such vice or habit, is this, — whenever a horse exhibits resistance to our reasonable wishes, he has always some motive, incentive, or cause that perhaps we cannot guess at for his doing so. His resistance, be it from what cause it may, becomes a vicious habit, and he learns by resistance a vicious, or at least wilful propensity. The first cause of his objection to turn to the right we may not know; but to show it might have a cause, I will instance two possible ones. He may have been run against and hurt in so turning, or he might for some months have been used by a person living, we will say, at Shepherd's Bush, and was daily ridden in and out of London, where his stable was to the left of Oxford

Street, and used for no other purpose. No occasion occurred for his being turned to the right, but was accustomed to turn to the left to both stables. This would induce the horse to take left turnings. We will say, to make the case worse, he was sold; and, showing his propensity to his new master, a contest ensued, in which the horse got the best of it. This makes a pretty piece of business of the affair, which my rider has to set to rights.

Now, if instead of taking the horse to the Park, the rider had taken him into or along the streets, he would have had two things to contend with —the horse's inclination to take every left-hand turning, and his dislike or refusal of going to the right, from having got his own way when wanted to do so. But in the Park he had but the latter to overcome; so the difficulty is diminished one half, from the animal having only one incentive to refusal instead of two. And I will venture to say by doing this he saves time; and in this case it is literally making out the saying that sometimes the "longest way round is the nearest way home;" for if my rider, while his horse had his propensity full on him, had taken the nearest way, if that happened to present many left-hand turnings, it is likely he would not have got home at all unless he had led his nag and walked.

I will endeavour to further show why it is by

no means losing time not coming at once to full contention with a horse on any particular point; and I think I shall be able to further show that we may even assist our carrying out our object, in making him do what we wish, by forcing him to do the diametrically opposite act, bearing in mind that to make him do anything that he is not prompted to do by self-will, the first thing to teach him is to obey.

We will say that a horse always hesitates, without absolutely refusing, in turning to the right. Why does he hesitate? It arises from his wanting a motive to obey more quickly. The motive in question would be either self-inclination, expected reward, or fear of correction. In the case of turning to the right, it is quite clear he has no inclination to do it; we have no absolute reward to offer him. It only, therefore, remains, in this case, to teach him to obey from fear of correction. To carry this point, I bear on the left rein. He yields; but to make him do so more quickly, I touch him with my heel, and speak to him; this quickens his movement. The next time I bear, as before, gently on the rein, but speak sharper to him, and touch him with the spur; this again quickens his motion. I increase the harshness of voice, and prick him with the spur, or give him the rowel, as his vivacity or dulness may require, till he will turn moderately,

or fly round as on a pivot, in accordance with the pull I give on the rein, the mildness or severity of my voice of command, and the pressure of the leg or the feel of the spur. This has taught him to obey, to obey without hesitation, and to do so when desired as momentarily as his powers will allow.

This has certainly in no way taught him to turn to the right, which he dislikes, but it has taught him instant obedience; and finding any want of this in one case produces punishment, will create a fear of disobeying in another.

I in no way recommend the kind of tuition last mentioned as one generally to be adopted. I have recommended a middle course; but even the one I do not recommend, would be better than beginning fighting with the horse at once, with every propensity, energy, habit, and recollection of having got the better of a rider in full array against us. In such case, it becomes a sort of kill or cure business, the risk of injury to rider and horse great, and the risk of victory great also.

"I believe," said I to my friend, "I have now told you how do correct your horse of the habit you mentioned, that is, going one way when you wish him to go another; but you must recollect that no plan will succeed with all horses without its being varied as circumstances may require; but I think you will find the system I recommend a

good principle to work upon. I may have been lucky, perhaps, but I have had to do with a great number of sulky, violent, and restive horses; but I never was beat by one I set about getting the better of. I mention this in no way as boast, further than having, I believe, a very uncommon share of patience and command of temper. By these, I may say, I literally wore the violence or obstinacy of such horses out. If one thing did not do I tried another, and if one hour's practice failed I worked on two or three more; and would have done so for the four and twenty, if I had thought it necessary or judicious to do so; at all events, I think," continued I, "by adhering to something like what I recommend, you will render any horse amenable, that is, fit for a gentleman to contest with. I know but one thing I could call all but infallible in teaching horses what we wish, or in breaking them from what is bad, and that is, patience."

CHAPTER IX.

REARING. — KICKING. — PLUNGING. — THEIR CAUSES AND CURES. — PREPARING FOR A TROT. — THE CANTER. — THE GALLOP. — CONCLUSION.

A FEW days after the conversation narrated in the last chapter, I accidentally met my friend, who, after a few preliminary remarks, asked me to tell him what to do in three cases where he was at a loss — namely, rearing, kicking, and plunging.

"Really, my friend," said I, "you are plunging into a pretty considerable mass of matter for consideration; but we will see into it, beginning, however, with one thing at a time."

The first I will dispose of shortly. If your horse does not rear so as to cause any just apprehension of danger, it is not a matter of much consequence; you will find he usually does so on being forced to go where he does not wish to go, or on being prevented going where he does wish. To sit him when he does rear, lean quite forward, give him all his head, and just before his feet reach the ground clap both spurs to him and hit him under the flank with a jockey-whip or good tough bit of ash plant. He cannot rise again till his feet reach the ground; he may plunge forward,

but if he does, it matters little. Serve him so whenever he rears. But, as you value your life, neither touch him with whip, spur, or bit while he is up or rising; for being made angry, he will rise higher on being touched by either than he otherwise would have done, and possibly high enough to fall over, or at least, sideways. If, however, you find your horse only to rear a little at times, more from play, excitement, or impatience than any thing else, do not punish him at all, for with such a horse you would make things worse; let him alone when he does rear, and pat him whenever he does what you want without. All you have to guard against with such a horse, and the only place where his sort of rearing would become dangerous, is smooth flag-stones: keep him off these, and slight rearing is not dangerous.

When horses rear dangerously high, there are violent modes of awing them from it that sometimes succeed with young horses, but rarely, indeed, with old ones; so it would be useless to mention them here. I can, with such a horse, only mention one safe plan to be adopted — "get rid of him."

If your horse kicks with you, be sure first to ascertain that your saddle does not hurt him, and that it is particularly well and softly stuffed, for a hard saddle will make a horse disposed to kick

do so in a very increased degree. There is very little danger to the rider by this nasty trick, for it is such—it is rarely vice—so punishment seldom succeeds. If he stands still and kicks, this must not be allowed under any circumstances; lay the whip well into him across his neck and over his ears; it will remedy the standing still at all events, and very often stop the kicking also. Many men use the spurs on such occasions, but they seldom do any good; they make him go on certainly, but they usually make him kick more violently. If, on starting, he goes on but kicks as he goes, all the rider has to do, or, indeed, well can do, is to sit firm, well back in his seat, and, getting his hands up, keep the horse's head well up also; in such a case it is not a bad plan to punish him by snatching at the bit also. It frequently stops the kicking by preventing him leaning on it or getting his head down, which, when he wants to kick, is the first thing he will try to do; and to show how much depends on keeping it up, there is a point of elevation of it at which a horse cannot kick with both heels at once *at all;* that is, he cannot raise them two feet from the ground; therefore the best advice I can give is, get your horse's head up to the utmost height your strength and uplifted hands and arms will enable you to do, and punish it by the bit till he ceases kicking. If, the very first kick he gives, you snatch his

head up with severity and rate him with "Would you?"—"what now?"—"have done!" and such terms as horsemen use, you often stop him at once. Before a horse kicks he usually begins wriggling a bit with his hind quarters. The moment he does this, give him an up-pull, with "What are you at, eh?" "quiet you, sir!" and so forth; this shows him you know what he intends doing and are prepared for him. It is very rarely a horse is cured of the propensity to kick under the saddle when he has once taken to it, but by management he may be ridden with perfect safety and but little inconvenience. If you find a horse too determined to get his head down for you to be able to get it, or at all events, keep it up, put a gag-bit on him; but I never found a horse whose head I could not get up with a severe twisted snaffle. I have seen many men attempt to do this with the curb; but be it known to the young horseman, a curb bridle has a tendency to pulling a horse's head down, not up. It is true, he will sometimes throw it up on its being too rudely pulled at; but this is from the pain it suffers; and chucking the head up, for the moment, not only loosens the pressure of the bit, but alters the bearing of it. And when he does chuck it up, it will be found he brings it down again; so the tossing it up is an act that, to avoid pain for the moment, he perpetrates contrary to the general tendency of the bit. In proof

of which, if he once gets his head down nearly to his knees, which some horses will do when held hard by the curb, a rider would find he could not pull it up by the same bit; drop that, lay hold of the snaffle, and up comes the head—at least, it is so with most horses.

The next question,—as to plunging,—I can only offer one mode of management in reply to, and that is a very simple one as to directions, but sometimes very difficult to adhere to; it is simply this,—"sit still and sit fast."

Plunging proceeding from various causes, it is impossible to give general advice to a rider, how to attempt remedying the fault. If it proceeds from being used ill by a colt-breaker or rider, of course, correction, that is chastisement, would make it worse. In such case, all the rider has to do is, what I say he must do in all cases of plunging, "sit fast," and sit quiet; instead of striking or even rating the horse, speak encouragingly to him, but, at the same time, not timidly, for horses are extremely cunning in perceiving whether the rider is afraid of them or not. If, to quiet a horse thus plunging, in an assured and cool tone, you speak to him something in the following way, "Who ho, foolish,—quiet now,—who ho,—come, have done you! who!"—the tone of your voice shows him you are not angry enough to hurt him, or frightened enough to let his plunging induce

you to get off, but that you wish him to stop his nonsense. But if, like a gentleman I once knew, who, if his horse only got pleasantly elated, would begin "Who, Prinny, who Prinny! who, who, there, softly, Prinny!" and this said in a voice of pitiable terror, Prinny will attend to you about as much as a foxhound in chase would to a lady, if she called to him "Bijou, Bijou, come here little dog!" Precisely the same thing must be done if he plunges, which is sometimes the case from having had a very sore back. I once knew a horse belonging to a friend, a welter weight, who plunged on being first mounted. I suggested, as a possible palliation, the getting a very soft-stuffed saddle-cloth or sheep-skin, with the wool, of course, next the horse's back, put under the pommel of the saddle. He got the latter. It succeeded far beyond what I at all anticipated. The horse soon stopped plunging the first time it was put on, and gradually left off the habit. This, of course, might not succeed in the generality of cases; but if the trick did arise from the back having been naturally tender or ticklish, I make no doubt but, in a greater or less degree, it would be found advantageous, and is certainly worth trying.

It is pretty easy to decide whether a horse plunges from determination not to be ridden, if he can help it, and to get the rider off, or whether he does so from merely a contracted bad habit.

If he is good-tempered, cheerful, and amenable in riding, after he has had his frolic out, we may infer he got into the habit first from frolicking as a young one, and not being checked for it. When the plunging proceeds from something like such cause, before he begins he will usually shake his head, throw it about, impatient of restraint; he will be found to dance and fling himself about, and then plunge forwards and sideways, as his whim induces him. There is no vicious determination in this, consequently he must not be punished. You must give him liberty of head, for you may with this horse venture to do so, in all ways but one—do not let him get it down. He will soon cease his game—so soon as he does, pat him and speak applaudingly to him.

It might be suggested that caressing a horse after he had been doing wrong would be encouraging him to do wrong again. It would if, from timidity, a rider was to caress him *while* plunging, in the hope of quieting him; but after he has stopped, he feels he is caressed while he is walking off quietly, and not while he was plunging.

Suppose a horse had taken his rider safely and handsomely over a large and difficult fence, it is very common to see a person, if he is a good-natured man, and fond of his horse, caress him as soon as he has got settled into his stride again.

I like to see a man do so, and should like the man. The act can do no harm; but it will do no good as to encouraging the horse to leap well again, for he naturally considers the encouragement is for galloping, because it is given while he is doing so; for it requires a retrospection and combination of ideas that a horse does not possess, to be sensible that he is encouraged for having done one thing while he is doing another —that is, for doing what is past, while he is doing what is present. But if this does no good, I will mention what does a great deal of harm.

I have often seen a man punishing a horse across a whole field because he made a blunder at the last fence! Nothing is more absurd; it is only indulging a contemptible, impatient ill-temper in the man, without doing the slightest good as to prevention of a similar act. The horse being whipped, spurred, and rated at while galloping, of course supposes he is doing something wrong, or is not galloping fast enough,—for how is the poor brute to know he is flogged because he did something wrong some time past, and at nearly a field's distance from where he is? An ignorant man may, and I doubt not would, say, "he knows well enough what he is punished for!" Such a man is a greater beast than his horse: he is an idiot if he does think the horse knows what he is punished

for, and he is a brute for punishing him if he thinks he does not.

But I think I can prove that the horse *does not* know this. It will be found that a horse, being punished in the way and situation I describe, invariably increases his speed from the punishment. Now, if the animal had powers of reflection enough to know he was punished for jumping badly, he would not exert himself by increasing his speed, knowing it was the bad jumping, not the slowness of his galloping, that he was punished for; consequently, going faster would not mitigate that punishment. But he *does* go faster,—and that shows that, so far from "knowing *well* enough what he is punished for," he knows *nothing about it;* and it is ebullition of temper, petty tyranny, and ignorance on the part of the rider, inflicting punishment when its cause is not known. If a horse goes lazily at a fence, and falls, it is not the time to cure him of it after it is done; but if on coming to the *next* fence, he goes lazily at that, clap the spurs to him, and use your whip more or less, as his laziness deserves. He will then know what he is punished *for*, because he is punished for doing that which he is *doing at the time*,—namely, *going lazily;* and finding that, he will go more freely at the next. Here the rider has justice and reason on his side; he does not strike his horse for any improper

gratification of temper or resentment, but to make him do what he ought to do. The horse understands him, and will get out of a bad habit by proper and properly-timed correction.

To return to plunging. The horse who does so from a sullen disposition and vicious determination to unhorse his rider, commences quite in a different way to the one who does so from the same kind of wickedness we find in boys, but without amounting to anything like vice. The vicious plunger does not begin by any lively motions — there is no dance in him; but as some men, in firm determination, set their teeth, so he sets himself, and with his fore legs fixed forwards, he stands dogged and motionless. The chances are he lets the rider mount quietly enough, and lets him sit on his back, if the rider was to sit still. When he had done so as long as the horse chose to let him, he would begin. He sets his mouth against the bit, gets his head down, claps his tail between his legs, hogs up his back, swells himself out, and without any previous motion, "he sets to," vaults off the ground all fours, and plunges forward, clearing ten, twelve, or fifteen feet at a bound. "Ware hawk!" rider, if he has not a firm seat, or gets nervous; he wants arms strong as anchors. This brute must be held firm, for he will plunge madly *any where;* and if he gets his head down, not one rider in a hundred

could sit on his back, which he hogs up till the saddle and rider are on the segment of a half-circle. If the rider *can* keep his seat till the horse ceases, he will probably go quietly afterwards during the day,—that is, if he is not wilful as to the road he is wanted to go; if he is, he will plunge again. He is a brute not worth the risk of breaking; his temper will always prevent his going pleasantly, and it will render him dangerous on the slightest provocation.

I have in a very few instances known a horse awed from this habit by bullying him out of it. To do this few directions are necessary. Get him into a light ploughed field, or on soft turf that gives good foot-hold,—but the ploughed ground is by far the best, not being elastic,—so as to assist him in his plunges. When there mount. Begin by urging him to move. The moment you do, he plunges. Set to with him. Let him plunge in any direction he likes. Hold him hard with one hand, and flog him over head, ears, neck, shoulder, and flank till he is tired and ceases. When blown, make him go as you wish. The moment he attempts to stop, set to at him again at once. This will sometimes bully a cow-hearted one, but nine times in ten it fails. Violence of temper may be palliated, and even cured, by time, temper, and patience in the rider—and with a nice horse it is time well bestowed; but sulk is never eradicated; therefore, though I have given the best instructions

and advice I am master of how to manage a horse addicted to ordinary plunging, the real sulky one I can only advise being got rid of, for horsemanship will not avail with him; or, at least, it is very rarely that it will. There is one thing I recommend to the notice of any rider who has a kicking or plunging horse—ride with three girths to your saddle; for such horses often burst their girths. Let two be moderately tight, the third slacker; so if the two break, you have one to hold the saddle till you can dismount.

"Well," said my friend, "as luckily I have not at present a very violent horse to contend with, have you any objection to a trot round the Park?" "None in the world," said I; and there we went. Arrived at Cumberland Gate, and turning to the right, I saw my friend begin working his arms, and rising up and down on his saddle, something like a tame duck in the water preparing for a fly. I was aware he saw me smile, so I began at once; "What on earth are you making all that piece of work about?" "Why," said my friend, "is it not right to rise in my stirrups in a trot?" "Certainly," said I; "but not in a walk." "Well," said he, "but my horse must walk before he trots." "Granted," said I; "then I am to conclude your manœuvres are a kind of working the steam up." "Confound you," said my friend, sitting down in his saddle; "you make me laugh, so I can't ride."

"I am glad," said I, "if I have made you do any thing but what you were at." "But," said he, "now seriously, is not rising in one's stirrups the way to make a horse start in a trot?" "About as much," said I, "as walking from the poop to the figure-head of a steamer will make her start. Your horse trotting induces you to rise in your stirrups, but rising in your stirrups won't make your horse trot. You may ride from London to Windsor, and, if you please, rise in your stirrups at the rate of, and fancy you are going, sixteen miles an hour, while your nag composedly takes his five hours to walk the distance. Capital exercise I grant; and to a man who wants exercise it would be better than trotting, because it would be harder work, for he would not have the motion of his horse to help him, but must depend on his own legs and arms for action; and a pretty profuse sweat he would be in by the time he got half his journey. But, really, for this sort of horse exercise it would be quite unnecessary for a man to come to the Park or any where else; he could ride just as fast in the stable."

My friend took all this at my hands uncommonly good-humouredly. "Well," said he, "perhaps you will tell me what I ought to do, since you have so ridiculed what I have done." "Au contraire," said I, taking off my hat; "you do not appreciate the value of what you have shown me. Why, I shall challenge the recom-

mendation of all the medical faculty, get the patronage of all invalids advised to horse exercise, and make my fortune. Your hint is worth all the books, papers, doggrel rhymes, songs, &c. I ever wrote, or ever shall write. Listen:

I shall buy three or four horses, — five pounders will do. They shall stand on the Pedlar reins, — no danger to my customers, invalids or not. Very corpulent gentlemen, I expect, will be a great pot to the Antimovable Equine Gymnasium. I let my nags per hour. Each gentleman works away in his stall at eight or sixteen miles an hour, as he pleases. No charge for extra speed — no express train prices, for each gentleman goes expressly as he likes; therefore, of course, they must all express their approbation of my new establishment. And now, in gratitude, I will see about starting in a trot.

Nothing more is necessary to do this with the generality of horses, than to sit down in your seat, ease your horse's head, and just press him with your legs, or make the unspellable sound K L K with the mouth, and he trots off at once. If he is addicted to canter, start him with the greater quietude; if he rises sit still, and putting your hand somewhat strongly on his mane, speak to him, "so then, soho then." When he is quite composed and settled in his trot, divide your reins, — that is, take one in each hand, — and rise in your

stirrups just as the action of your horse inclines your body to do so. If you rise too quickly on a slow goer, you will look like one of my anticipated patrons of the Antimovement Equine Establishment; if you rise too slowly on a quick stepper, you will be equally out of time with each other, — for remember, the horse will not accommodate his action to yours, but it will be for your accommodation to suit your action as to rising in your stirrups to his; for nothing looks more odious, indeed ridiculous, to a bystander than to see rider and horse going disjointedly, or not harmonising in their movements; nor when or while this is the case, do rider or horse go comfortably together.

Never rise suddenly or with an apparent jerk from your saddle. Let the motion of the horse give *you* the impetus, and do it smoothly; for in this as in dancing, it is far better to underdo movement than to overdo it. The faster the horse goes, generally speaking, the easier he goes, and the less is the rider necessitated or induced to rise from his saddle; in fact, with some fast trotters it would be almost impossible to rise at all.

Foreigners seldom rise in their stirrups in the trot; but then they ride but little for amusement, though a good deal for show. Nor do I wonder at their not riding much, for to be bumped on a saddle as they must be in a ten-mile trot would

be quite sufficient punishment to most men for burglary.

"You will think I am always finding fault, I fear," continued I; "but I must do so now." "Well," replied my friend, "what am I doing badly now?" "I cannot say you are doing any particular thing badly," I replied; "but you are letting your horse go badly. You must, I am sure, feel you are not riding comfortably,—in fact, you cannot keep an even motion with your horse. This arises from your letting him go, in technical phrase, unconnected. He does not step true with his fore legs, and is, as it were, half-cantering with his hind ones. He is not going collectedly, or, in further horse phrase, within himself; he is hanging on your hand, but not facing his bit, — in fact, he is not going with energy; he is dawdling in his pace. Move the bit in his mouth, and catch fresh hold of his head; press him with your legs, and steady him till you find he goes true. He is, as it were, going faster than his legs, or, rather, his legs do not move quick enough for the pace. Where he takes five long steps he should take six shorter ones, but quicker. The rate of going will be the same, but the manner of going will be widely different. He would tire in seven miles as you have been riding, more than he would in going ten properly within himself, and would tire you to death in riding him; and, further, if the ground

was at all heavy, he would go worse every hundred yards he went.

"Now you have done as I advised, you find how very differently he goes; he brings his nose in, steps clean, light, and evenly. You and your horse go together; before he went with his hind legs like a pig in a string." "And pray," said my friend, laughing, "what did I go like?" "Why," said I, "something like the man driving him, — when piggy pulls one way, and the man another. You went deucedly uncomfortably; and, what is more, any one could see you did."

Whenever you find a free horse ceases to face his bit, unless he does so from fatigue, it arises from your overpacing him. You may by holding him, and putting the spurs to him, make him increase his speed for a short time, but it will be for a very short time. He cannot, as it is termed, "live" at his best speed for one mile, though that speed may not exceed twelve miles an hour, or ten. The trotter that does eighteen miles in an hour is not going at his best. The horse that does his mile in two minutes and forty-five seconds, does not do the mile at extreme speed; he does it in the quickest time he can do a mile. But possibly a hundred yards of the ground were done at the rate of a mile in two minutes and a half; could he have kept it up for the whole distance, he would have done the mile in that time. Thus the

horse who, at his extreme speed, can only go at the rate of twelve miles an hour would tire, if kept up to that, as soon as the horse that could rate eighteen, if kept up to *his* maximum speed. People are very apt to overlook this; and because the rate of going is comparatively slow, they fancy their horse is going at his ease, when he really is going in distress. They are then very much surprised in finding him tire, and set him down as a bad horse, when, perhaps, he is no such thing. He is an unfairly and injudiciously ridden one — there has been a bad rider in the case, instead of á bad horse.

It is very common to see a man urging his horse in a trot, and if he "breaks up," — that is, gets into a gallop — he hauls him up, strikes him, and rates him, and forces him again into a trot. He breaks up again very shortly; he is pulled up more severely than before, and still worse treated — for what? Not for being unwilling and refusing to *go*, but because he is tired to death of the one same continued strain on his sinews and muscles, and has sense enough to wish to vary the exertion. If such a man had sense enough to let him do so, even if he galloped the next mile faster than he trotted the last, he would be fresher at the end of it than when he broke out of the trot.

This is why horses will gallop over a considerable length of ground in very short time with com-

parative ease; they are not at their *best*, or near it, in doing so.

We read of or see a horse doing a gallop match of twenty miles in the hour, — and a great deal is thought of it. No doubt it is a great exertion, and a kind of thing I most thoroughly deprecate; still I know any good, game, fast horse, in proper condition, will do it, and perhaps without any extraordinary distress.

We then hear of some butcher on his old mare doing fourteen miles "in the hour in a trot." "Well, that's nothing to do," says some one. We know that as well as some one does; but this said fourteen miles was very likely done under the cruellest distress — yet the poor brute excites no pity for her suffering, because nature had not given her speed to do eighteen.

One of the most dead-beat and shamefully-spurred horses I ever had the unpleasantry of seeing was a mare losing a wager that she did seven miles out and back within the hour. The only consolatory part of the business was, her master, who rode her, lost his wager. I most sincerely wish it had beggared him; a hope I always fervently aspirate towards the makers of long matches against time, when they know they must or will be done in great distress.

Let me tell the young rider, also, that if he wishes to break his horse's knees, and get a fall,

he can scarcely do what is more likely to produce such results than keeping a tired horse to a trot. If he does make a mistake, down he goes, from wanting powers and energy to save himself.

I had great pleasure, a few days afterwards, in seeing my friend trotting along from Chesterfield Gate with a neat, very horsemanlike seat,—his horse and he going with one mind and motion, as easily as the Siamese twins. I congratulated him. "Well," said he, "I am glad you see nothing of the man and his pig about us now." "Pardon me," said I, "but I do—I see you are on as good terms with your nag as Paddy is with his pig when he is ready to pay the rint!"

"Well," said my friend, "you can't say I am like some young ladies—practising a bravura by themselves, instead of the *Sol fa*, as directed by the master. I have not perpetrated a canter yet, but mean to try one with you to-day."

"Here's with you," said I, putting my horse into a canter. My friend meant to do the same with his, but the horse (as he had lately been doing) trotted off. His master kicked him with the one heel, then with the other; tried both bits; chucked at his horse's mouth; leaned forward, and tried to raise himself in his stirrups, but could not; bobbed down on his seat again, his horse going a not-to-be-described pace, and my friend looking as comfortable in his saddle as a cat in a bowl on the

water! At last, he gave his horse a stripe with his stick, which drove him into a sprawling gallop, wrong leg first — my friend, in his confusion, pulling to stop him with the near-side curb and off-side bridoon-rein in one hand.

"My dear fellow," said I, "if you mean to charge the bushes and wall into Kensington Gardens, well and good; but, if not, let me recommend you to halt, and when you have come to a halt, we will see if we can't get to the quick step in better order."

After my friend had succeeded in—I can hardly call it pulling his horse up, but rather bringing him to, and each had recovered the fluster they were in from their rather forcible outset, I put him on what I conceive to be a better plan for usual practice as to putting a horse into a canter.

"As," said I, "you were not quite successful in your last attempt; not to fail again, we will use precautions that are not always necessary, but are advisable if a horse is at all difficult to get into a canter out of a walk.

"Now, without doing it so as to be perceived by bystanders, or persons riding with you, as your horse walks along, get him a little more in hand; and while he continues walking prior to cantering, having a rein in each hand, hold him a trifle firmer with the left than the right, and also just press

him very gently with your left leg. This induces him to walk in a trifling degree obliquely to the left, causes him to step more short and quick, and puts him altogether a little on the alert, so as to be ready to obey your signal, when given, to go off promptly, and brings him somewhat into that direction of head, neck, and body he should go in when in his canter. The quicker and shorter he steps while walking, the more readily can he go off into the other pace; and further, it prepares him that you are going to make him do something, and puts him in readiness to obey. All this, though it takes some time to describe, is to be done invisibly, and only relates to a dozen steps of your horse. But take this as a fundamental rule, never to be departed from where or when it can be avoided,—whatever you want a horse to do, or mean to make him do, always, in a greater or less degree, as may be requisite, prepare him for it before you actually call upon him to do it, otherwise you may do so at a moment when it is physically impossible he can obey.

"Your horse being now prepared, bear stronger on your left-hand rein, bring your leg closer to him, and, just as you feel he is about putting his near foot to the ground, make the sound 'klk' with your mouth, and, giving a gentle, quickened pressure of the left rein, touch him with your left heel, and off he goes at once.

"Why it is best to give these signals to canter as he is about putting the near leg down is this: if he had continued his walk, of course, after he had put the near foot down, he would have advanced the off one still in the walk, but on your signal being given to change the pace, he advances it in the canter; but if you give that signal when the off leg is coming down, of course he cannot go off with it at that moment—he must either lead with the near leg, or wait another step till the off one is in its turn ready to advance.

"If your horse is handy, you need not do this; you have then only to gather him together, hold the near rein the firmest, and pressing him with your leg, and giving the 'klk,' he will, the moment his step allows him to do so, go off of himself into the canter, right leg first.

"If you find your horse, as some will frequently do, trot a step or two before they break into a canter, it is hardly worth while to have any contention for so trifling a matter, unless the horse is for a lady's use; but if he is in a trot, and you insist on his breaking at once into a canter, remember it is absolutely impossible he can do so, unless at the moment when his step enables him to do it.

"If you find him all but refuse to go from the trot to the canter, do not attempt to drive him by force into the canter; for all you get by that will

be this—you drive him to the top of his speed in his trot (say that is at the rate of twelve or thirteen miles an hour); from this he bursts not, of course, into a slow, neat, connected canter, but into a thundering gallop, at a still faster rate. This shows how little those persons know of horsemanship whom you daily see going in so preposterous a manner. If we want a horse to canter at the rate of six miles an hour, and he is trotting ten, one would think the commonest sense would tell any man that he must stop his horse's rate of trotting before he can canter, and not drive him on faster; for, in the latter case, suppose the animal to be willing to canter, what must he do?—why, slacken his pace in defiance of the stick that is being applied to him!

"If you find he continues to trot, and refuses to canter from simple pressure of the near rein and heel, pull his head to the right; let him go a few steps thus; then quickly and forcibly, in accordance with the sort of mouth he has, pull his head well round to the left, and clap the near-side spur to him, well back towards his flank. This sends his croup away to the right, and you pulling his fore-parts to the left, the motion is so sudden, he can scarcely avoid breaking into the canter, right leg first; but mind, while you do this, hold him back that he does not quicken his pace, otherwise of course he gallops, not canters.

"By practising your horse in this way, you will soon render him so handy, that, on holding your reins in one hand, you have only to press with the finger of the bridle hand on the near rein, and on his hearing your 'klk,' or saying, 'come,' he will go off as smooth as a duck into the water.

"If on any occasion you find your horse begin to hang in hand in his canter, instantly move the bridle in his mouth; if you are riding on the bridon, move it from side to side, raising your hands as you do so. If this does not suffice, catch hold of the curb, and press your horse with your legs or heels. A horse may pull, and pull very strongly, yet go most handsomely and pleasantly; but, the moment he *hangs* on his bit he ceases to do either, and generally also ceases to go safely."

I have mentioned, when on the subject of the trot, that a horse cannot at once turn right or left, if at the turn he is leading with the opposite leg. This holds equally good as relates to his canter. A horse cannot turn quickly to either side in his canter, unless he is leading with the leg on the side he is wanted to turn.

It is true a person may see a horse cantering or even galloping with the right leg leading, and might see him, a moment afterwards, take a short turning to the left. This would appear to him a total refutation of my assertion, that he could not turn quickly in an opposite direction with the leading leg; but it would not be so, for such horse

did not turn *while* leading with the right leg, he changed it the moment he found he was to turn to the left; so that, in point of fact, at the turn he *was* leading with the left leg, though the stroke before he was leading with the right. This very handy horses will do of themselves when practised to do so; but a rider should be quite certain his horse is thus handy before he trusts him, for should he not change his leg, he would in all probability come down headlong.

All horses should be taught to change the leading leg handily, when motioned by the rider to do so; but further, they should be taught to do this of their own accord, whenever convenience or safety requires it; and all this it is very easy to teach them to do, by riding them in an inclosed place, and making them practise a figure of eight. Why an enclosed place is far the best is this — if in a field, the horse has room all round him, so may hesitate in turning quickly; but if, by going straightforward, he would knock his head against a wall, of course he would turn. An excellent out-of-doors breaking school is made in a few hours, by merely wattled sheep-fold hurdles placed endways up.

After walking and trotting a horse in any small inclosure a short time, he knows the turns as well as his rider, and will make them of his own accord. Then he may be put into the slowest canter he

can be made to go, with, say, his usual right leg first. This, if started in the right place, makes the first turn come handy, being to the right; but crossing the inclosure brings on the difficulty. He has now to turn to the left. Just before doing so, force him on by your heels gently. He finds he cannot turn if he does not change his leg. He very likely makes a boggle, but in such situation that matters little. If he has broken off his canter, put him into it again, and take him across your school. Then comes the right turn. If he has the wrong leg for this, he will boggle again; but if you persevere, and do not flurry or frighten him, he will very soon learn to change his leg at each turn, without being made do so by the rider; which has this advantage — he will on all occasions do it when necessary, should the rider fail or forget to motion him to do so. It is almost needless to say, in such practice, the rider must be very careful not to counteract the action of the horse by his hand; but, if he does anything, he should facilitate his turn and change of leg, and somewhat lean his own body towards the side the horse turns.

"Your horse is now cantering just as he ought to do," said I to my friend; "you now know how to make him commence, and also, as I see, to continue to do so. This being the case, I do not see I can be of any more use to you."

"But," said my friend, "there is galloping and leaping." "Oh!" replied I, "as to galloping, it

is what no gentleman does in public in the Parks or on a road if he can help it; if obliged to do so, a hand-gallop is the most he will perpetrate, and that is only an extended canter, to which you are quite equal;—and as to leaping, that is not much wanted in London."

"I thought it was sometimes," said my friend, "when gentlemen got a 'spin' in the Park, in defiance of the keepers, eh?"

"No more of that, *Hal*, if you love me," said I, kissing my hand and cantering off.

Some months after my friend told me he intended next season to go with hounds. "Said like a trump," said I. "'Aquila non captat muscas. I find you mean to go on the same principle I do with my books. You have shown yourself before your friends and the public on the road, have been fortunate enough to have escaped censure, so you now mean to venture into the field; do so; and if I should be fortunate enough to find this book escape censure, at a proper time you and I, under such favour, will have a turn at Field Riding, as we have had on ordinary Practical Horsemanship."

H. H.

THE END.

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